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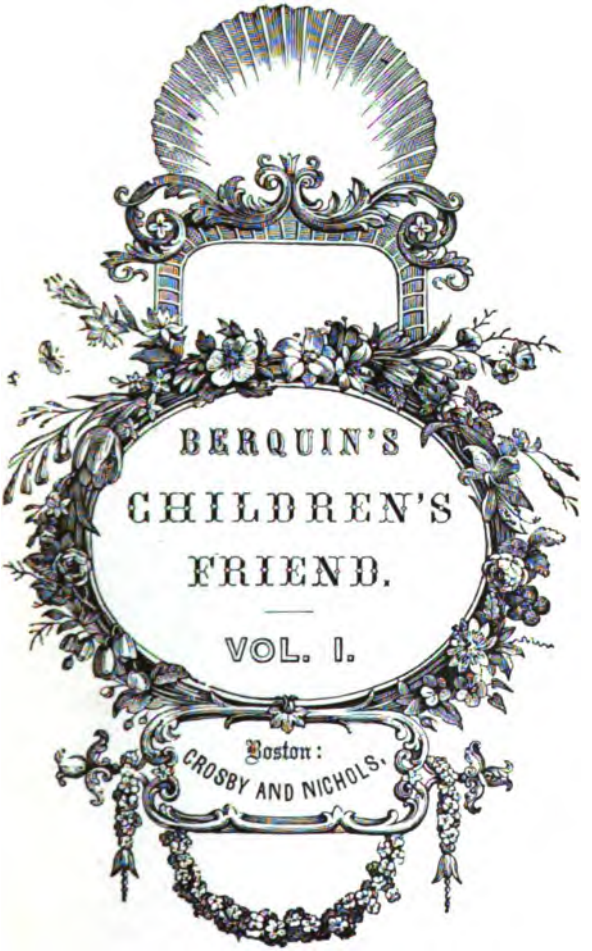
BERQUIN'S
CHILDREN'S
FRIEND.
VOL. I.
Boston:
CROSBY AND NICHOLS.

THE

CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

FROM THE FRENCH OF M. BERQUIN.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH THIRTY ENGRAVINGS FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS.

TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
CROSBY AND NICHOLS,
117 WASHINGTON STREET.
1864.

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND has long been out of print. The publishers have therefore been induced to issue an improved edition, that the children of the present generation may have an opportunity of enjoying the same noble and correct sentiments which have so often delighted and instructed their fathers and mothers in their youthful days.

Imitators of the beauties of this work have increased without number; but none, in the long list, have rivalled or approached the merits of their pattern, the inimitable Arnaud Berquin. We take up his volumes, preserved from our earliest years, with the veneration due to an old friend over whose tales we have wept a thousand times, and expect our children to weep a thousand times to come. All his little dramatic scenes abound with a touching liveliness and pathos, which throw a charm over every admonition, divesting virtue of all austerity, and rendering it enticing. There is a naiveté about many French writers, which renders their productions pleasant on almost all subjects. They never lose their gaiety. This trait abounds in an eminent degree in every tale in the Children's Friend; in every narrative, however serious, preceptive or grave, the moral is always conveyed in a playful style, suited to youthful taste.

It is well known, that the most honorable prize, offered by the Royal French Academy, for the most useful book for youth, was awarded to M. Berquin for the composition of the Children's Friend.

In order to compress the work into two thick volumes, we have omitted some of the minor pieces which were calculated for older readers, and inserted all the dramas, these last being the most interesting part of the work, and the most pleasing for children.

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THE LITTLE BROTHER.

THE

CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

THE LITTLE BROTHER.

FANNY rose one morning very early, intending to gather some flowers in the garden, and to make a nosegay to carry to her mother, who was then in bed. As she was preparing to go down stairs, Mr. Glassford, her father, entered her chamber, smiling, and took her up in his arms, saying, 'Good morning, my dear Fanny! come with me; I am going to show you something you will be glad to see.'

Fanny eagerly asked, 'What is it, father?'

'God gave you a little brother last night,' answered he.

'A little brother! ah, where is he? Let me see him. Pray carry me to him!'

Her father opened the door of the chamber in which her mother lay. There was beside the bed a strange woman, whom Fanny had never before

seen, who was wrapping up the new-born infant in clothes. Fanny asked a thousand questions, which her father answered as well as he was able; and thought he had satisfied her curiosity in every thing, when she said to him, 'Father, who is that old woman? how she handles my little brother! Are you not afraid she will hurt him?'

Mr. G. O no! never fear. She is a good woman I sent for, to take care of him.

Fanny. But he belongs to mother. Has she seen him yet?

Mrs. G. (*drawing back the curtains of her bed.*) Yes, Fanny, I have seen him. Are you not glad to see him?

Fanny. O indeed I am, mother. You have given me a very pretty young companion! what a cunning little face he has! and all red, as if he had just been running. Father, will you let him play with me?

Mr. G. That is not possible, my dear; he cannot stand upon his little legs. You see how weak they are.

Fanny. O dear! the little legs! I see it will be a long time before we shall run about together.

Mr. G. All in good time. He must first learn to walk; and then both of you will be able to play and jump in the garden.

Fanny. Shall we? O, my poor little fellow; I must give you something to make you fond of me. Hold; I have a little picture in my pocket. There, take that. What is the matter, father? the little

monkey will not have it. He holds his little fists shut.

Mr. G. He knows not how to use them yet. We must wait a few months.

Fanny. Is that the case? aha, my little man, I will give you all my playthings. Well, are you glad of that? answer me. He seems to smile. Call me Fanny. What, won't you speak?

Mr. G. He will not be able to speak these two years. But, Fanny, take care that you do not disturb your mother with too much talk.

Fanny. Ah, father, look there, his face is quite changed; see, he cries; certainly it is because he is hungry. Be quiet, my little man, and I will go and get you something nice.

Mr. G. Don't trouble yourself, my dear, about his victuals. He has no teeth yet. How should he be able to eat?

Fanny. Can't he eat? What will he live on then? Must he die?

Mrs. G. No, my child. God has given me milk in my breast for the nourishment of your little brother. He is very weak as yet; but after some time you shall see how he will tumble about on the floor like a little lamb.

Fanny. How I long to see that! Only look, what a pretty tiny head! I dare not touch it.

Mr. G. You may touch it; but very gently.

Fanny. O, quite gently. O dear! how soft it is! it is like a ball of cotton.

Mr. G. Every little child has such a head as your brother.

Fanny. If he were to fall, he would break it all to pieces.

Mrs. G. Certainly. But we will take good care to hold him, so that he shall not fall.

Mr. G. Do you know, Fanny, that, five years ago, you were as little as he is?

F. As little as he! O, father, you are joking.

Mr. G. No, my dear; nothing is more true.

Fanny. I do not remember it.

Mr. G. Do you remember when I had this carpet put on the floor?

Fanny. Why, it has always been there.

Mr. G. No. I had this carpet laid down at the very time when you were as little as your brother.

Fanny. Indeed! then I never took notice of it.

Mr. G. Little babies never take notice of what passes. When your brother shall be as old as you, ask him if he remembers that you tried to-day to make him learn to pronounce your name. You will then see if he recollects it.

Fanny. What, and did I nurse at mother's breast too?

Mr. G. Certainly. You don't know all the pains she has taken for you! In the first place, you were so weak that you could scarce take any nourishment. We were afraid every moment that you would die. Your mother used to say, 'My poor infant! if she should fall into a fit!' And,

believe me, she took infinite pains to get you to suck a few drops of milk.

Fanny. Ah, dear mother! it was you then that taught me to feed myself?

Mr. G. Yes, my child. After your mother had succeeded in making you take to the breast, you grew stout and good-humored. Such were her cares for nearly two years, every day and every hour of the day. Sometimes when your mother had through fatigue fallen asleep, you would disturb her rest with your cries. Then she was obliged to run to your cradle. 'My dear Fanny,' she would say, while she endeavored to quiet you, 'surely you must be thirsty;' and then she would take you to her bosom.

Fanny. And was my head at that time as soft as my brother's?

Mr. G. Just the same, my dear.

Fanny. What, mine! that's so hard at present! O dear, I must have broken it a thousand times.

Mr. G. Ah, my child, we took much care of you. Your mother for a time renounced every pleasure, and kept from all company, on purpose not to lose you a moment from her sight. As often as business, that was absolutely indispensable, obliged her to go out, she was in continual fear for you. 'My dear Grace,' she would say to your nurse, 'I give Fanny into your care, to look to her as if she was your own child;' and she was continually making the good woman presents, to induce her to take particular care of you.

Fanny. My dear good mother! But was there ever a time, father, when I could not run? I that can run so well now. See; in three or four steps I am across the room. Who taught me this?

Mr. G. Your mother and I. We put a bandage of velvet well stuffed about your head, that, if you happened to fall, you might not hurt yourself. We then held you by leading-strings, to assist your first attempts in walking; and every day we went into the garden upon the grass-plat, where, placing ourselves opposite to each other at a little distance, we put you down standing all alone betwixt us, and held out our arms to invite you to come, sometimes to one, and sometimes to the other. Your slightest stumble made our blood run cold. It was by repeating these trials that we taught you to walk.

Fanny. I never have thought that I gave you so much trouble. Was it you too that taught me to speak?

Mr. G. Yes; for that you are indebted to us. I used to take you upon my knee, and repeat the words father and mother, until you were able to lisp them. Every word, that you this day speak, we taught you in the same manner. I dare say you can recollect, that it was we who showed you how to read.

Fanny. O, I remember that perfectly. You placed me every day at dinner between you; and, at the dessert, a plate of raisins was set upon the table, and some small squares marked with the letters. Whenever I named them rightly, you al-

ways gave me some raisins. O, it was a very pretty play.

Mr. G. If we had not taken pains with you, and had left you to yourself, what would have become of you?

Fanny. I should have been dead long ago. Dear good father and mother!

Mr. G. And yet you sometimes vex your father; and are sometimes disobedient to your mother.

F. I will never be so any more, as long as I live. I did not know how much you had done for me.

Mr. G. Take notice of the attention we shall give to your little brother, and then think, 'I too have given my parents the same trouble.'

This conversation made a lively impression upon Fanny. When she saw the tenderness, which her mother testified for her little brother; all the anxiety, that she felt for his health; the patience she exerted in endeavoring to make him take his nourishment; how much she was afflicted whenever she heard him cry; with what tender solicitude her father relieved her of some part of her fatigue; and how they both took infinite pains in teaching the infant to walk and speak and read; she would say in her own mind, 'My dear parents have taken the same trouble with me!' This reflection inspired her with so much affection and gratitude, that she ever after faithfully observed the promise she had made, never voluntarily to cause them the slightest uneasiness.

LITTLE JACK.

MR. CHURCHILL was returning home one day on horseback, after taking a ride about his estate. As he passed the wall of a burial-ground belonging to a small village, he heard the cries of some one on the other side. This worthy man had the heart not to hesitate a moment in going to the relief of the unfortunate person. He alighted; and, giving his horse to the servant who followed him, sprang over the enclosure of the burial place. Standing on

tiptoe, and looking round, he perceived in a corner, at the farthest end, a grave, covered with earth that was quite fresh. Upon this grave lay, at his full length, a child, about five years old, who was weeping. Mr. Churchill approached him with looks of kindness, and said to him, 'What do you here, my little friend?'

Child. I am calling my mother. They laid her here yesterday, and she does not get up.

Mr. C. That is because she is dead, my poor boy.

Child. Yes, they say she is dead, but I cannot believe it; she was so well the other day, when she left me with Susan our neighbor. She told me she was to come back, but she does not come. My father is gone away too, and my little brother, and now the other little boys of the town won't have me.

Mr. C. Won't have you? Why so?

Child. I don't know; but, when I want to go with them, they drive me away, and leave me by myself. And they say naughty things about my father and mother. That is what grieves me most of all. O, mother, get up, get up!

Mr. Churchill's eyes filled with tears. 'You say, that your father has gone away, and your brother too; where have they gone?'

Child. I don't know where my father is; and my little brother went away yesterday to another town. There came a gentleman all in black, just like our parson, and took him away.

Mr. C. And where do you live now?

Child. With our neighbor Susan. I am to stay there until my mother comes back, as she promised me. I love my other mammy Susan very well; but *(pointing to the grave)* I love my mammy that lies there a great deal better. O mother, mother! why do you lie so long? when will you get up?

Mr. C. My poor child, you call her in vain, for you will never awaken her.

Child. Well, then, I will lie down here and sleep by her. I saw her when they put her into a great chest to carry her away. O, how white she was! and how cold! I will lie down here and sleep by her.

Mr. Churchill could no longer refrain from tears. He stooped down, took the child in his arms, and kissing him, tenderly said, 'What is your name, my poor little fellow?'

Child. They call me Jacky, when I am good; and when I am a bad boy, they call me, 'You Jack.'

Mr. Churchill smiled at this answer. 'Will you take me to Susan?' 'O yes, yes, sir,' answered the child; and, running before Mr. Churchill as fast as his little legs could go, conducted him to her door.

Susan was not a little surprised to see a gentleman enter her cottage with little Jack. The child, pointing to her, and running to hide his face in her lap, said, 'This is she; this is my other mammy.' She knew not what to think of so extraordinary a visit. Mr. Churchill, however, did not leave her long in suspense. He told her of the situation in which he found the child, and the compassion he felt for him; and requested her to favor him with

information concerning the parents of little Jack. Susan desired him to be seated, and began thus—

'The father of this child is a shoemaker, whose house joins mine. He is an honest, sober, laborious man, under thirty, and a comely person. His wife was a handsome woman, but in poor health. Withal she was very careful, and a good housewife. They were married about seven years ago, lived affectionately together, and would have made the happiest couple in the world, if their worldly affairs had been more prosperous. John had nothing but his trade; and Margaret, left an orphan, brought her husband only a little money that she had saved in the service of a worthy clergyman, the curate of the next parish. This little sum was laid ont in buying a bed, and a few other articles of household furniture, with a small stock of leather for his work. In spite of this poverty, they contrived to maintain themselves during the first years of their marriage, by dint of labor and good management. But children came, and then began their difficulties. Yet still they might have supported their growing family, if misfortunes had not happened.

'Poor Margaret, who had worked in the fields every day during the hay time, to bring home some money at night for her husband, fell sick from fatigue, and continued so all the harvest, and all the winter. Physic is very expensive, besides which the work did not go on so well, because John's customers left him one by one, as they were

afraid of being neglected or ill-served in a house where there was a sick wife.

'At last Margaret's health grew better, but her husband's business had declined. He was obliged to borrow money to pay the apothecary; and, having lost all his customers, he was now quite out of work. At the same time Margaret could earn nothing; her strength was so much reduced that nobody would give her employment. The rent of their house, and the interest of the money that they had borrowed, came heavily upon them. They were more than once obliged to suffer hunger, and thought themselves very happy when they had a morsel of bread to give to their children.'

At these words, little Jack withdrew into a corner of the room, and began to sob.

'With all these misfortunes, it happened that their hard-hearted landlord, finding that they were unable to pay the rent of the two winter quarters, threatened to put John in jail. They begged hard of him to have patience until the hay-making time came on, because then they could earn something by working in the fields; but neither their entreaties nor their tears could soften him, although he is the richest man in the town. It was with much ado that he allowed them a month's delay; but he said, that if, at the end of that time, he was not paid the whole, he would sell their furniture, and put John in prison.

'The family were now a picture of melancholy and patient distress, and a sight of them was capa-

ble of softening a heart of stone. Believe me, sir, I have often been grieved to the soul at hearing the complaints of these good neighbors, whilst unable to relieve them. I went once myself to their landlord, and prayed him to have compassion on their extreme sufferings. I offered to pawn to him all that I possessed in the world. But it was to no purpose. 'You are no better than they are,' answered he; 'this it is to have such trash of tenants as you are all together.' Ah, sir, (*here the tears trickled down Susan's cheeks,*) I bore this reproach patiently, that I might not provoke him more; but O, how I suffered in being nothing but a poor widow, unable to afford the least comfort to those worthy people! How much good might the rich do, if they only had the same inclination as the poor!

'But to return to my unfortunate neighbors. I advised Margaret to make known her distress to the clergyman, with whom she had lived several years as an honest and worthy servant, and to beg of him to advance her some money. She answered, that she would speak about it to her husband; but that she could hardly think of this expedient, because the curate might imagine they were reduced to want through their own bad management. Three days ago she brought me her two children, as she used to do, and begged me to take care of them till the evening. She intended to go to a neighboring village, and try if she could procure some hemp to spin from a weaver, in order to pay her debt. She could never reconcile herself to applying to the cler-

gyman, her old master; but her husband was to go in her stead, and he had set off the same day.

'I took charge of the children with pleasure, as I had known and loved them from their birth. Margaret, as she was going away, clasped them to her breast and kissed them, as if it were with a presentiment that it was the last time she should see them on earth. Her eyes were swimming in tears, as she said to the eldest, 'Jacky, I shall be back very soon, and then I'll carry you home.' She took me by the hand, thanked me for being so good to her children, kissed them once more, and departed. A little while afterwards, I heard a noise in her house, like something falling; but, thinking that she was gone, I supposed it might be nothing but the inner door shut by the wind, and thought no more about it.

'The evening came, it grew dark, and I saw nothing of my neighbor. I thought I would go to the house, and see if she might not have returned and gone in with her load of hemp, previous to coming for the children. I found the door open, and went in. But O, how was I surprised and shocked at beholding Margaret dead, stretched at full length at the foot of the stairs! I stood motionless at first, not knowing what to do. At length, after trying in vain to recover her I ran for the surgeon, who, feeling her pulse, shook his head, and sent directly for the coroner. They held an inquest, the surgeon attending, to ascertain the cause of her death; and they reported, that

she must have died suddenly, or that, having fallen in a fit, and unable to call for assistance, she had expired in that condition.

'I can easily imagine how it happened. She had returned to her house to ascend the loft for the bag that was to hold her hemp, and, as her eyes were still dim with tears, she had missed a step in coming down, and fallen from the top of the stairs head foremost to the floor at the bottom, The bag that was beside her seemed to be a proof of this; yet the coroner thought otherwise. The body was ordered to be buried next morning before daylight, in a corner of the churchyard, and an enquiry ordered to be made to find John. I proposed to the parish officers to keep the two children myself; for, although I find it hard enough to live, yet, thought I, the bounteous God knows that I am a helpless widow, and will surely assist me to feed them. The younger boy did not long stay with me.

'Yesterday, soon after Margaret's burial, her old master, the worthy curate, accidentally called to see her. He knocked for some time at her door, and as nobody opened, he came to my window, and asked me what had become of John Johnson the shoemaker. I answered that if he would step in for a moment, I had many things to tell him. He came in, and I told him all that had happened, which made him shed tears. Afterwards I told him that John had concluded to apply to him in his distress. He seemed surprised, and assured me he had not seen him. The two children went

up to him, and he fondled them a good deal. Little Jack asked him if he could not awake his mother, who had been a long time asleep. The tears came into the good curate's eyes when he heard the child talk in this manner; and he said to me, 'Good woman, I will send for these two little boys to-morrow, and I will keep them at my house. If their father returns, and should be able to support them, I shall restore them to him whenever he requires it. In the mean time I will take charge of their education.'

'This plan was not very agreeable to me; for I love these little innocents as if I were their mother, and it would have given me some pain to see them taken from me so soon. 'Doctor,' said I to him, 'I cannot consent to part with the children. They have a regard for me, and I for them.'

'Well then, my good woman,' said the curate, 'you must give me one boy, and I will leave you the other, since he is likely to be happy; and, from time to time, I will send you something for his maintenance.'

'I could not refuse the good parson this benevolent request. And he asked little Jack if he should like to go with him. 'What, where my mother is?' said Jack; 'Yes, sir, I will go.'

'No, my little man, I do not mean there; but to my handsome house, and my handsome garden.'

'No, no, let me stay here with Susan. I'll go every day where my mother is. I would rather go there than to your handsome garden.'

The good gentleman did not wish further to trouble the child, who had gone to hide himself behind the curtains of my bed. But he told me that he would send for the youngest, who would require more care than the other; and at his departure, he left some money.'

'This, sir, is all that I know about the parents of little Jack. What causes me uneasiness at present is, that John does not return; and that a report has circulated, that he has gone to join a gang of smugglers, and that his wife killed herself for grief. These stories have been so busily spread in the village, that even the children repeat them; and whenever my poor Jack wishes to go among the boys, they are ready to beat him, and drive him away. The poor child is now quite dull, and never stirs abroad, except to his mother's grave.'

Mr. Churchill listened in silence to Susan's narrative, and was much affected by it. Little Jack came again close to her side. He looked at her with fondness, and several times called her mother. At length Mr. Churchill said to Susan, 'My worthy woman, you have conducted yourself very generously towards this unfortunate family. God will not fail to reward you for it.'

Susan. I have done no more than my duty. We are sent into this world to assist and relieve each other. I have ever thought, that I could do nothing more pleasing in the sight of God, as a small return for all the blessings that I have recei-

ved from him, than to comfort my poor neighbors to the utmost of my power. O, that I could have done more than I did! But I am possessed of nothing in the world but my cottage, a little garden where I raise a few greens, and what little money I can earn by the work of my hands. Nevertheless, during eight years that I have been a widow, God has given me an honest support, and I hope will do so while I live.

Mr. C. But if you retain this child, the expense of maintaining him, till he is capable of earning his bread, may be inconvenient to you.

Susan. I shall take care not to let him suffer. We will share even to my last morsel of food.

Mr. C. And how are you to furnish clothes for him?

Susan. I leave the care of that to him who clothes the fields with grass, and the trees with green leaves. He has given me fingers, which sew and spin; they shall work to clothe this poor little orphan. Whosoever can pray and work, will never want.

Mr. C. Then you are resolved to keep little Jack with yourself?

Susan. Yes, sir; I could not live under the thought of sending away this destitute infant, nor of letting him come upon the parish.

Mr. C. You are, I suppose, related to his family?

Susan. Not otherwise than as neighbors and fellow-christians.

Mr. C. Then, as I am also related to both of you by religion and humanity, I will not suffer you alone to have all the honor of doing good to this or

phan, since God has provided me with means more ample than yours. Commit the education of little Jack to my care; and, since you are attached to each other, and since your benevolence merits my esteem as much as the child's affection for his mother, I will take you both home with me and provide for you. Sell your garden and cottage, and come live at my house; there you shall have a comfortable support, and a home for the rest of your life.

Susan. (*looking at him with gratitude.*) Do not be angry with me, sir. May God reward you for all your goodness; but I cannot accept your offer.

Mr. C. And why not?

Susan. I am fond, sir, of the spot where I was born, and where I have lived so long; then again I could not suit myself to the bustle in a great house, nor to the sight of many folks in a family Nor am I used to ease, and nice living. I should fall sick, if I had nothing to do, or if I eat finer food than ordinary. Let me abide in my cottage with little Jack. It will do him no harm to fare a little hard. If you choose to send him now and then a small matter, to pay for his schooling, and to furnish him with tools for whatever trade he may learn, the gracious God will pay you an hundred fold; at least this boy and I will pray to him daily for you. I have no child; he shall be instead of one to me; and what little I possess shall belong to him, whenever it pleases the Lord to call me to himself.

Mr. C. Well then, be it so. I do not wish that

what I intended for your good should render you unhappy. I will leave little Jack with you since you are so well together. Talk to him often about me, and tell him that I am in the place of a father to him : while you, on the other hand, will take upon you the cares and name of the mother for whom he grieves so much. I shall every month send you what may be sufficient for your subsistence. I will call frequently to see you, and my visits shall be for your own as well as his welfare.

Susan lifted her eyes towards heaven, and implored its favors on Mr. Churchill. She then said to the child, 'Come hither, Jack, and ask this gentleman's blessing ; he will be your father now.' The little boy did so, but said presently to Susan, 'How can he be my father ? he wears no apron.'

Mr. Churchill smiled at this innocent question of little Jack ; and, throwing his purse on the table, 'Farewell,' said he, 'generous Susan ;—farewell, my little friend ;—it shall not be long before you see me again.' He then mounted his horse, and took the road that led to the parish where the curate lived who had taken home the younger orphan. He found the curate reading a letter. After the first civilities, Mr. Churchill explained the object of his visit to the worthy divine, and asked him if he had gained any information concerning the father of these unfortunate children.

Curate. I have just received this letter, written by him to his wife. It was inclosed in one to me. He requests me to deliver it to her, and console

her for his absence. As she is dead, I have thought it necessary to open the letter addressed to her. Here it is ; please to read it.

Mr. Churchill took the letter, and read as follows.

'Dear wife,

'I cannot, without sorrow, think of the trouble that my absence must have occasioned you. But let me inform you of what has happened. On my way to the clergyman's house, I began to think in this manner : 'Of what use will it be for me thus to go a begging? I shall only get rid of one debt by contracting another; and shall gain nothing but the uneasiness of thinking to pay it. I, who am yet young and can work, to go and ask for so much money! I shall be either taken for an idle fellow or an intemperate one. The parson, to be sure, married us, and loves us like his children ; but, if he were to take a dislike, and refuse me! or, on the other hand, as he is not wealthy, if he were not able to relieve us! and then, supposing that he advanced me the sum for a year, should I be sure to have it in my power to pay him? And if not, should not I be as bad as a thief? It would be defrauding this good man.' Thus I reasoned, my dear Margaret ; and I began afterwards to think how I might extricate our affairs, by acting in a just and fair manner. I often sighed, and put up my prayers to heaven. At last the thought came into my head, and I said to myself, 'You are still a young man; you are stout and able-bodied; what harm would there be if you went on board a

man-of-war for a few years? You can read and write, and cast accounts pretty well; you may still make a fortune for your wife and children; you may, at least, clear yourself of debt. Consider that, if you have good success, and happen on some prize money, it will bring riches and happiness to your family.' For about half an hour these were my thoughts, when I saw part of a press-gang at a distance behind me. They soon overtook me, asked me whence I came, where I was bound, and whether I would enlist as a volunteer? I pretended not to like the sea; but they questioned me again, and offered a bounty of five pounds. I told them that for so much I would serve during the war. 'Done,' said they. 'Come along with us, my lad, and the affair shall be settled presently.' They brought me before the lieutenant, who asked me some questions, which I answered so much to his satisfaction, that he paid the bounty immediately. And thus, my dear Margaret, I have entered the king's service to clear my affairs. I send you a draft for the five pounds. I would not keep a penny of it. Pay the forty shillings that we owe, and whatsoever else may be due. With the remainder do the best you can to keep house. Live well, that you may recover your strength. Clothe our children, and send them soon to school. I know, that, though you are handy and careful, you will not be able to make this sum last very long. My wages are ten dollars a month; I will try to find a way to forward them occasionally; and,

whenever we arrive in harbor, I shall ask leave to go on shore to see you. My dear Margaret, do not grieve; trust in God. We may soon have a peace. I will then return to you, and we shall begin housekeeping together once more. My lieutenant has promised me to write to our churchwardens, that the parish may not be uneasy on my account. Bring up our children carefully; make them fond of home, and fond of work. Pray with them every day, and teach them their duty, that they may grow up to be honest men; for you are very capable of instructing them well. Live in the fear of the Lord, pray to him for me, and I will pray to him on your behalf. Answer me soon. You have only to give your letter to the curate, he knows best how to direct it. Remember me to the two boys. Tell Jack, that, if he is a good boy, I will bring him something at my return. God be praised for all things. Continue still to love me, who remain 'Your ever faithful husband,

JOHN JOHNSON.'

Mr. Churchill's eyes were filled with tears while he read this letter. When he had finished it, he exclaimed, 'This man may truly be called a good husband, a good father, and an honest man. Sir, there is real pleasure in contributing to the happiness of such excellent people. As to John's debts, I will pay them; and will enable him to follow his trade decently. Let this money remain for the children, who have cost their father dear; and let it be divided between them, as soon as they are ca-

pable of doing business for themselves. Till then keep it in your own hands, and speak to them of it at times, as the strongest proof of their father's affection. I will pay you interest for it, to be joined with the capital; for I wish to make the deposit a sacred one.'

The worthy curate was too much affected to answer Mr. Churchill. The latter understood the force of his silence, and, pressing him by the hand, took his leave.

All Mr. Churchill's designs in favor of John have been realized. John Johnson, now safely returned home, enjoys easy circumstances and is in a prosperous condition, and would be one of the happiest of men, but for his grief at the loss of Margaret. He finds no other comfort, than in talking about her with Susan. This worthy woman considers herself as his sister, and as a mother to his children. Little Jack never lets a day pass without going to his mother's grave. He has made such good use of Mr. Churchill's generority, by improving himself, that this good gentleman has it in view to establish him in the most advantageous manner. Mr. C. has taken like care of John's younger son; and he never mounts his horse without recalling to mind the affecting incident of Little Jack. Whenever he encounters any subject of chagrin, he visits the abodes of the persons he has made happy, and always returns home with a tranquillized mind, relieved of every uneasy sensation.

A GOOD HEART COMPENSATES FOR MANY INDISCRETIONS

A DRAMA IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. VAUGHAN.	FREDERICK, *his Nephew.*
MARY ANNE, *his Daughter.*	PETER, *an old Coachman.*
DOROTHEA, *his Niece.*	SERVANT.

SCENE. *An apartment in Mr. Vaughan's Country-House.*

SCENE I.

Mr. Vaughan.

THIS is what we gain by taking care of other people's children! This Frederick, how I loved him! he was, I believe, dearer to me than my own son, and the scapegrace now plays these pranks! How could he so change from what he was in infancy! Such goodness of heart, such spirit, such cheerfulness! The courage of a lion, and the mildness of a lamb! We could not help loving him. But let him never appear before me again. I will not hear him mentioned.

Enter Dorothea.

Dor. Did you send for me, uncle?

Mr. V. I have fine news for you, concerning your rogue of a brother.

Dor. Concerning Frederick ?

Mr. V. There, read that letter from Richard ; or I will read it to you myself. *(Reads.)*

' Dear father,—I am sorry to have none but disagreeable news for you ; however, it is better for you to receive it from me than from another. Our dear Frederick,'——(O yes ! he deserves that affectionate name now.)——' Our dear Frederick goes on very indifferently. He sold his watch some days ago, and, what is still worse, most of his school-books and books of devotion. I will tell you how I came to know it. I asked, the other day, at a shop of second-hand books, for the ' Whole Duty of Man ;' for, as I had worn out mine own by often reading it, I thought I could do no better than purchase another. The bookseller showed me one, which I knew immediately to be Frederick's, as his name was upon the title-page. I bought it for a shilling, but said nothing about it, for fear of prejudicing our schoolfellows against him. I contented myself with showing it to the head master, who sent for the bookseller, and asked from whom he had that book. The bookseller confessed that he bought it of my cousin, and Frederick could not deny it, but said that he sold it because he wanted money ; and that, until he should be able to buy another, he had borrowed one from a friend who had two copies. The head-master asked him what he had done with his mon-

ey, and Frederick told him, though I suspect his account to be all a fib! O, thought I to myself, we must find if he have not parted with some of his necessaries too. I thought first of the watch, that you gave him for his new-year's gift, to let him see how his time went, which was a matter that he minded very little, as you may remember. I asked him what o'clock it was? He seemed confused, and told me his watch was at the watchmaker's. In order to be certain, I went thither that moment. There was not a word of truth in the whole story. I expostulated with him, as an affectionate cousin ought to do; but he answered me, that it was no concern of mine, and that his watch, as he parted with it, was much more usefully employed than in his fob, as he had occasion no longer to know the hour for his business. Who knows what he may have done that was still worse? for one cannot guess the whole?'——Well, what do you say to this, Dorothea?

Dor. Dear uncle, I own I am as much displeased at my brother as you are. Yet——

Mr. V. A little patience! This is not all. The best of the story is to come. (*Reads.*)

'Only hear what he has done since. The day before yesterday, he went out in the afternoon without leave. Evening came on; he did not return. Supper bell rang; he was not to be found. In short, he staid out the whole night, and did not come in till the next morning. You may imagine how he was received. The master asked him

where he had been; but he had invented all his answers beforehand. And, even though all which he said were true, he is to appear this evening before all the masters. If they do him justice, he will be expelled shamefully, or at least sent home. What afflicts me the most is his ingratitude for all kindness, the disgrace which he brings upon us, and the irregular way of life which he follows. I cannot believe that he told the truth, in speaking of the place where he spent the night.'——(And why do you not mention it?)——'But I wish that he may. It would be still worse, and would only increase your resentment. He threatens now to run away, and go home.'

Mr. V. Yes, yes, let him come home! let him only set his foot upon my threshold! he will see the consequence. Let him go where he spends his nights. Dorothea, I desire you never to speak a word to me in his favor. They may put him in prison, send him home, or expel him ignominiously; it is all one to me. I shall never concern myself about him. He may go to some seaport, and ship himself as cabin boy. I have used him as a son too long.

Dor. True, my dear uncle, you have been as a father to us; and even our own parents could not have shown more care and kindness to us.

Mr. V. I have done it with pleasure, and take no merit to myself for it. Your mother, while I was abroad on my travels, did the same for my

children. It doubly became my duty, and I never to this day declined it; but——

Dor. If my brother has forgotten himself for a moment, it is owing to his impetuous temper. You have had him long under your eye. Whenever he has committed an error, his repentance and sorrow for offending you have always exceeded the offence.

Mr. V. Well, and how many of his indiscretions have I not pardoned. When he burnt his eyebrows and hair with his fire-works; when he threw a stone through our neighbor's window, and broke a large splendid looking-glass; when he fell into the mire, spoilt a new suit of clothes; when he overturned the handsomest carriage I ever had; did not I forgive him all this? I attributed these mischievous freaks to a petulance which did not as yet show a bad disposition. But to sell his watch and his books; to leave school of nights, and sleep out contrary to rule; to rebel against his masters; and still have the face to think of coming home to me!—

Dor. My dear uncle, be pleased first to hear what he can say in justification of his conduct.

Mr. V. Hear *him?* Heaven forbid that I should even see him again. I shall tell all my tenants to receive him with a good stick, if he offers to come among them.

Dor. Ah, no! Your heart could never consent to such harshness. You will not deny the request of a niece who loves and honors you as her father.

Mr. V. You will see whether that will be difficult.

Dor. Will you have me think then, that you no

longer reverence the memory of your sister? and that you no longer love me?

Mr. V. Love you? I have no fault to find with you. Your brother's misbehavior shall not alter my sentiments towards you. But, if you love me, do not teaze me with any more solicitations. Study only to live happy in my presence.

Dor. How can I live happy, while I see my brother in disgrace?

Mr. V. He deserves it but too well. Why not tell what he did with the money, and where he slept?

Dor. It appears from the letter, that he confessed both. It is Richard only who will not believe him. [*Looks at Mr. Vaughan, with tears in her eyes.*] Ah, dear uncle——

Mr. V. Well, he shall have one chance more, on your account. I will wait for the master's letter.

Enter Servant.

Ser. A messenger, sir, would speak with you.

Mr. V. What has he brought?

Ser. A letter from the school. [*delivers the letter.*]

Mr. V. Right. I was waiting for this. It comes from the head master. I know his hand. Where is the messenger? let him wait for my answer.

Ser. Shall I show him up, sir?

Mr. V. No; I will go down. I wish to inform myself from his own mouth.

[Mr. Vaughan goes out. Dorothea following him, the servant makes a sign to her to stop

Ser. Miss Dorothea, if you please!

Dor. What have you to say?

Ser. Master Frederick is here.

Dor. My brother ?

Ser. If he be not come, he is not far off.

Dor. Who told you so ?

Ser. The messenger, who overtook him on the road. Ah, miss, what has master Frederick done ?

Dor. Nothing unworthy. Do not believe him capable of it.

Ser. I never thought so of him. We all loved him, and would have given our lives for him. He was liberal to us for the least service we could do him. He spoke for us to your uncle whenever he was in a passion with us ; and he was a friend to

all the poor people in the neighborhood. I wonder his schoolmaster could be angry with him. I see how it is. They were going to punish him for some prank, and he, being a fine spirited young man, would not be roughly handled.

Dor. Where did the messenger find him?

Ser. About a mile off. He was sleeping under a willow on the bank of a little brook.

Dor. My poor brother!

Ser. The man stopped till he awoke. You can think how surprised Frederick was on seeing him. He imagined that this man had been sent to apprehend him; and he told him he would sooner be torn in pieces than submit.

Dor. Ah, I know his stout, resolute way.

Ser. The messenger protested that he had such a regard for him, that, if he were sure to be scolded or even lose his place for it, he would not molest him. He then told his message, and how he was spoken of at school.

Dor. What did my brother resolve to do?

Ser. Although worn out with fatigue, he walked on by the messenger's side, till they came to the edge of our grove. Frederick struck in there, to hide himself in the grotto; and there he will stay for the messenger's return, to know how your uncle will take matters.

Dor. O if I could speak to him!

Ser. Probably he wishes it as much as you do.

Dor. My uncle often walks that way. If he should meet him in his anger! Be so kind as to

run and tell him to hide himself in the barn behind the trusses of hay. I will go to him as soon as my uncle goes out to walk.

Ser. Never fear, miss; I will take him there myself, and help him to hide. [*Exit.*

Dor. What trouble he continually causes me! yet I cannot help loving him.

Enter Mary Anne.

Dor. Ah, dear cousin, how I longed to speak with you! and yet, alas, I have but very bad news.

Mary. I know the whole. My father just now gave me my brother's letter to read. That which he has received from the schoolmaster has redoubled his anger against Frederick.

Dor. I know not by what method I shall endeavor to justify him.

Mary. I venture to say he is innocent. Don't you know Richard's hypocrisy? He commits all the faults, and is artful enough to lay the blame upon others. This is not the first instance of his endeavoring to injure your brother in my father's opinion. Twenty times has he, by underhand complaints, had him almost turned out of the house; and then, when all has been cleared up, he himself has been discovered to be the only person in fault. I see, from his own letter, that he is an asperser, and that Frederick, at worst, has only been imprudent.

Dor. What consolation your kindness affords me! Yes, my brother is naturally well inclined, sincere, generous, unsuspecting; but he is also petulant,

daring, and inconsiderate. He is headstrong in his resolutions, and lacks respect for those who do not coincide with him in his humor.

Mary. And Richard is envious, hypocritical, dissembling, and fawning. Like a cat, that first gives a paw soft as velvet, and afterwards strikes with her talons when least suspected. How willingly would I exchange my brother, with all his pretended virtues, for your's 'with all his imperfections on his head.' The worst is, that Frederick is not here.

Dor. What if I should say he were?

Mary. Where is he? Let me run to him. I long to see him.

Dor. Hush! I think I hear my uncle, talking to himself.

Mary. Well, you are Frederick's sister; it is but right that you should see him first. I will stay here with my father, and try to soften him. Do you run to the poor wanderer, and give him some words of comfort and hope——

Dor. Yes, and a good lecture besides; for he deserves it, at all events. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Mr. Vaughan, Mary Anne.*

Mr. V. I am so provoked with this boy that I have not been able to write an answer back. However, the messenger may stay here till to-morrow morning. Let me compose myself a little.

Mary. How, father! are you still angry with my poor cousin? Is his crime so very great?

Mr. V. It becomes you well to plead in his favor

I see that your head is no better than his, and you would have done worse perhaps in his place. Yet you both have a good example before you.

Mary. Who is that?

Mr. V. My good boy, Richard.

Ma. O yes; my brother is a boy of great veracity indeed! very generous! he is a pretty pattern!

Mr. V. I know that Dolly and you are no friends to him. I myself, from your opinions of him, had conceived a prejudice against him; but his master gives me a good account of him to-day.

Mary. Nay, did not all his masters quite sicken you here with his praises! They knew his father's wealth; and people often hope to wheedle presents from a father by flattering him about his son.

Mr. V. I grant that they flattered me a little with regard to him; but, from his earliest childhood, he has never played one prank for a hundred irregularities committed by Frederick.

Mary. Frederick's pranks never hurt any one but himself.

Mr. V. Did he hurt nobody but himself when he overturned my chariot? A carriage elegantly gilt and quite new, that cost me two hundred pounds!

Mary. That was an accident; imprudence is pardonable at his age. Peter was trying the carriage, and Frederick teazed him so much to be taken up on the seat, that at last he consented. After they had gone a little way, Peter dropt the whip, and went down for it. The horses, finding the

reins in weaker hands, ran off. Luckily the harness gave way, and nothing suffered but the carriage.

Mr. V. That was not enough perhaps! And who, on the whole, had more reason to complain than I?

Mary. Frederick, whose head was terribly cut; but above all, poor Peter, who lost his place by it.

Mr. V. I cannot even now think of it with patience. That fine adventure cost me above eighty guineas!

Mary. And how much grief has it cost the good-natured Frederick! He will never forgive himself for having occasioned poor Peter's disgrace.

Mr. V. Two good-for-nothing fellows, fit to go together! I am surprised however that you select the worst characters, and plead their cause. Really, it is a pity that you were not born a boy, to be companion to your cousin. I think you would have had charming adventures together.

Mary. Nay, but—

Mr. V. Silence! your teazing tires me. I am going to take a turn in the garden. Find Dorothea, and both of you come to me. (*Goes out without his hat.*)

Mary. I shall have a good deal of trouble to reconcile father. I will not, however, despair. He is only ill-natured in words.

Dorothea. (*half opening the door, and peeping in.*) Hist!

Mary. Well?

Dor. Is my uncle out?

Mary. He has just gone. Where is Frederick?

Dor. He waits for us on the back stairs.

Mary. You have only to take him to our room.

Dor. No; that won't do. Jenny is there.

Mary. Why cannot we bring him here? Nobody comes here when father is out.

Dor. You are right; and it will be easier too for him to slip out upon any occasion. Stay here, I will bring him up. (*Goes out.*)

Mary Anne. How anxious I am to hear him tell his story! and I shall be glad to see him too. It is above a year since he left us. Ah! I hear him. (*Goes to the door to meet him.*)

Enter Dorothea and Frederick.

Mary. (*embracing him.*) Ah, my dear cousin.

Dor. He deserves this kindness, indeed, for the trouble he has caused us!

Fred. Dear cousin, do I find you still the same? You have never been so hard upon me as my sister.

Dor. If I were as much so as your uncle; ah, then——

Fred. What does *he* say? Can it be true, that he is so enraged against me?

Dor. If he knew we concealed you, we should have nothing more to do than quit the house.

Mary. O, it is very true. Do not think of appearing before him yet awhile. He is in no humor to receive you.

Fred. What can our head master have written?

Dor. A handsome encomium upon your exploits

Mary. My brother had touched a little upon the subject by yesterday's mail.

Fred. What! has Richard written? Then I have no need of justification. He knows the whole matter as well as I, for I trusted him with every thing.

Mary. Shall we judge of you from his letter?

Fred. Well, if I be not innocent, I am the greatest rogue——

Dor. That is saying nothing. You *must* be either one or the other.

Fred. And could you think me guilty? What is my crime? selling my watch?

Dor. No more than that? who can tell if your shirts too, and your clothes——

Fred. Very true. I would have sold every thing, if I had occasion for more money.

Dor. Truly, a very pretty defence! And to pass whole nights from the school?

Fred. One night, sister.

Dor. And to rebel against merited punishment?

Fred. Say rather against an outrage which I did not deserve. If I had submitted to it, I should always have borne a blot in the opinion of my uncle; and, if they had expelled me, I should never have appeared before you.

Mary. But, dear Frederick, what can you say in your own defence? We ought to know it, in order to clear you to my father.

Fred. These are the facts. Some days ago, it was said there was to be a fair in a neighboring village. Our master gave a few of us leave to go thither, in order to amuse ourselves, and gratify our curiosity.

Dor. Then it was for oranges and tarts that your

watch and *Whole Duty of Man* were sold? or perhaps for a sight of monkies and tumblers.

Fred. Surely, my sister must have a great taste for those things, to suppose one could spend money on them. No, it was not so. I was thirsty, and went into a public house to have some beer.

Dor. Why, that is worse still.

Fred. Really, sister, you are very severe. But let me finish. While I was sitting there——

Mary. (*listening at the door.*) We are undone! my father! I hear him!

Dor. Run! run!

Fred. No; I will wait for my uncle, and throw myself at his feet.

Mary. O no, dear cousin! he will not listen to you. Do, for my sake——

Fred. Would you have me go?

Mary. Yes, yes, leave me to manage for you.

[She pushes him to the door of the back stairs, shuts it, and returns.

Enter Mr. Vaughan.

Mary. Ah, father, I see you have soon returned from your walk?

Mr. V. I am looking for my hat. I don't know where I left it.

Dor. Here, here it is.

Mr. V. You could not think of bringing it to me.

Dor. I must have been blind, sure, not to see it.

Mary. Who can think of every thing?

Mr. V. Truly, you have many things to occupy your attention!

Mary. I was thinking of poor Frederick.

Mr. V. Must that name still be rung in my ears?

Mary. Well, father, let us talk no more about him. Would you not choose to finish your walk before the dew falls?

Mr. V. No. I will not go out this evening.

[Mary Anne and Dorothea look at each other, shaking their heads with an air of disappointment.

It is too late. Besides, I have been told that my old coachman is below, and would speak with me.

Mary and Dor. What! Peter?

Mr. V. Whatever loss he has caused me, the damage is done, and he has been sufficiently punished for it. I would know what he has to say.

Mary. He might very well wait till you return from your walk.

[Mary Anne and Dorothea whisper together.

Mr. V. No, no. I shall dismiss him the sooner.

[Dorothea endeavors to steal away.

Where are you going, Dorothea?

Dor. (*confused.*) I have business down stairs.

Mr. V. Well, tell Peter to come up. After all, I pity the poor man. I never had so good a coachman. My horses were kept so sleek, you might see your face in their coats; and he never embezzled their corn at the tavern. [*Dorothea goes out.*

Mary. If you had kept him, you would have spared poor Frederick many a sorrowful moment.

Mr. V. Say no more of him. He caused me to discharge Peter, and to be at present without a

coachman; for, after him, I conceived a dislike to all others. I shall never find one equal to Peter.

Enter Dorothea and Peter.

Dor. Uncle, here is Peter.

Pet. I beg pardon, sir, but I cannot think that you are still angry with me. I hope you will not take it amiss that I make bold to wait on you, as I pass your house, and beg you to let me have a discharge.

Mr. V. Did I not give you one?

Pet. I never had any other than 'There, take your wages; quit my house this moment, and never let me see you again.' You did not give me time, sir, to ask for a gentler discharge.

Mr. V. You did not deserve more ceremony from me, after destroying my finest coach. I almost wish Frederick had broken his neck at the same time.

Pet. What could you expect, sir? A coachman's sense lies in his whip, and I had just lost possession of mine. But I shall be wiser for the future.

Mr. V. Well, it is all over now. How do you live?

Pet. Since I left your house, sir, I have never had a happy moment. You know, upon quitting your service, I went to live with Major Bramfield. O what a master! He could never speak but with his cane lifted up; but rest his soul!

Mr. V. He is dead then?

Pet. Yes, sir, to the great joy of his soldiers. He never gave me his orders without swearing like a Turk. His horses had their full measure of corn,

and his people plenty of hard knocks, but not much bread.

Ma. Poor Peter! why did you stay in his service?

Pet. Where could I go? What kept me there was, that my wife found employment in the house in washing and mending linen. She earned at least half as much as maintained our children. Every one trembled before the Major. Death alone made him tremble, and laid him low. At present I am out of service, and know not where to lay my head.

Mr. V. But you know I never wish any one to starve, much less an old servant.

Pet. I always thought so; but those terrible words, 'Never let me see you again,' sounded like a clap of thunder in my ears. Ten of the Major's greatest oaths could not frighten me so much.

Mary. And you have had no master since?

Pet. Ah, miss, it is not here as it is in London. In the poor little villages about here, people want their corn more for themselves than for their horses. I worked at daily labor in the fields; my wife spun; and my children went about asking charity. But all of us together made so little, that, at the week's end, we were not able to pay the rent of a poor garret. Very soon we had nothing but the earth for our bed, and the sky for our covering. My poor wife died of grief and hardship.

Mr. V. You deserve it all. Why did you not come and ask my assistance?

Mary (*to Dor.*) Now my father shows himself once more. A good sign for Frederick.

Pet. Ah, sir, what a woman she was! Never was a better wife. Whenever I came home at night, not having earned a farthing, and thought that I must go to bed hungry, I always found half of her morsel of bread left purposely for me. When I foamed with rage, like one in despair, and would have destroyed every thing around me, she always restored me to my calm senses, and made me a reasonable man again. Now she is dead, and I cannot bring her to life. There my real unhappiness began, and heaven knows where it will end.

Dor. Poor Peter!

Pet. I had no hopes of finding a service in these parts, so I set out one fine evening, with my little girl in my arms, and my boy by the hand. We walked a great part of the night, and slept the remainder under a hedge. Next morning by break of day we were in sight of a town. Luckily, there was a fair there that day. I earned some money by carrying burdens. But, sir, I must say, it was an angel, an angel from heaven, master Frederick——

Mr. V. An angel? what Frederick, that reprobate?

Mary & Dor. [*approaching Peter with looks of joy and curiosity.*] What, Frederick? Frederick?

Pet. Dear master, use *me* ill if you will; but not that fine, generous child. I would rather that you should trample me under your feet.

Dor. O tell us, Peter; tell us.

Pet. My little Lucy went to ask charity at the door of a public house. Master Richard and mas-

ter Frederick were there, sitting at a table, with some beer before them.

Mr. V. Aye, fine inclinations ! in an alehouse !

Dor. He went only to refresh himself!

Mary. He had leave, father, to see the fair. Your good Richard, you see, was there too,

Pet. He presently knew my child, and rose from table in spite of all his companion could say. He made poor little Lucy drink a glass of ale, took her by the hand, and heard from her a brief account of our misery. He then desired her to bring him to me, and found me in the next street, drinking out of my hat at a pump, as the heat of my walk and labor had made me thirsty. I thought I should go mad upon seeing him. Shabby and dirty as I was, I took him in my arms before every body ; and hugged him so close, the folks were afraid I should stifle him. He was heartily glad to see me too. At last, as there was a crowd around us, he told me to lead him to a place where we might be by ourselves, and I took him to a barn, where I had already bespoke my bed for the night.

Mary. Father, I would wage——

Mr. V. Silence. Well, Peter ?

Pet. I told him what I have now told you. The child began to weep. 'I should beg for you,' said he, 'as I am the cause of your misfortunes ; but I will not sleep without relieving them. Here, Peter,' said he, feeling in his pockets, 'take what money I have about me.' I refused it ; but that made him angry. I told him, that it was money

given him for his amusement; and that, as for me, I was used to hardship. He frowned, and stamped with his feet, and appeared so vexed, that I was compelled, as it were, to take his purse.

Mr. V. How much was there in it?

Pet. Almost a crown. He would keep only sixpence. 'It shall never be said,' continued he, 'that an honest servant of my uncle, who has neither robbed nor defrauded any one, shall be obliged to beg with his children about the streets, and not even have a lodging. Take a little room. Before three days I will return, and I will support you until I shall have written to my uncle. We have both provoked him; but he is too humane and too generous to abandon you to misery.

Mr. V. Did he really say so, Peter?

Pet. I can take my oath of it, master.

Mary. Well, we believe you; finish your story.

Pet. 'How do you employ your children?' said he, as he took my Billy upon his knee. Employ them? said I, they go about selling nosegays and toothpicks; and when nobody buys, they ask charity. 'That is not right,' said he. 'They would never learn any thing by that course but idleness and profligacy. You should make your boy learn a good trade, and put the girl out to decent service.'

Mary. Frederick spoke very right, father.

Pet. Yes, said I; but how can I offer the children to any body in these rags? If I only had three guineas, I could settle them. There is a weaver hard by, who employs young hands, and would take my

Billy, if I could give him two guineas fee money; and a dairy-man's wife would take Lucy into her service, if she was a little better clad. Then I could offer myself for service in some rich family, and not be reduced to stroll about like a vagrant.

Mr. V. And what did Frederick say?

Pet. Nothing, sir. He went away; but, two days after, returned. 'Where is the weaver, who will take your son as apprentice? carry me to him.' So I went; he spoke with him privately awhile. 'And the dairy-woman,' said he, 'who will take charge of Lucy? where does she live?' I took him there too, He left me at the door; went and spoke to the woman in her dairy; joined me again, without saying a word, and we came away. After we had walked some distance, he stopt, 'My honest old friend,' said he, 'make yourself easy as to your children.' He then pointed me to a shop of second-hand clothes, that was close by, where he had paid beforehand for this jacket, and this great coat—Don't I look like a gentleman in them?

Mary. O my excellent cousin! good-natured Frederick.

Mr. V. *(wiping his eyes.)* I see now where the watch went.

Pet. That is not all, sir. I caught him slipping money into my pocket. I wanted to return it, and told him that he had already done too much for me. But, if ever I saw him fall into a passion, it was then. He said, sir, that it was you who had sent it to him for my use. And when I answered I would

go directly and thank you, he told me that you would not have it mentioned. Ah, thought I to myself, Mr. Vaughan was *so* good a master, perhaps he would take me again! For all that, I did not dare to apply, as master Frederick had forbidden it.

Mr. V. O, Frederick! my dear Frederick! you have still that noble and generous heart I always thought you to possess from your infancy.

Mary. And what induced you at last to appear again before my father?

Pet. My errand was this: The weaver would not take my boy without a copy of the register of his baptism, and for that I had to come to the clerk of this parish. As I entered the village, I heard that lord Vasty wanted a coachman. It seemed as if master Frederick had sent me good luck. I waited on lord Vasty, who promised to take me, provided I could bring a proper discharge from my last master. I could not go into the other world to ask the Major for one; so I took my chance to apply to you, sir, though sadly frightened. And, if you refuse, I shall at least return you my thanks for the relief that you were so kind to convey to me through the hands of master Frederick.

Mr. V. No, honest Peter. You are indebted to him alone. He has stripped himself to cover you. But he is also indebted to you for the return of my favor. You have saved him from a great misfortune. My resentment against him was so great, that, except for your timely application, he would have been banished from my presence.

Pet. Do you say that, sir? Then I am the happiest man in the world if I have done him any good.

Mr. V. That sneaking varlet, Richard, had almost turned my heart against him. How could I trust that knave, who has so often deceived me? But the head-master of the school?——

Mary. Why, father, Richard must have imposed on him as well as you.

Mr. V. But, bless me, they have written word that Frederick has fled. If he should grow desperate! If any misfortune should happen to him!

Pet. A horse! a horse! I'll bring him back, if he were at the world's end. [*Going to run out.*

Dor. (*holding him.*) My dear uncle, would you really pardon him? would you take him to your arms once more?

Mr. V. Yes; though he had sold all his clothes! though he were to return as naked as he was born!

[Dorothea makes a sign to Mary Anne, and goes out

Mary. What if he were here, father?

Mr. V. Here? has any one seen him? where is he?

Pet. Ah, if he were here! if he were here! I would jump up to the ceiling for joy.

Enter Frederick and Dorothea.

Mary. Well, father, do you see him?

[Frederick kneels to his uncle. Peter shows an extravagance of joy.

Fred. Uncle, dear uncle, will you forgive me?

Mr. V. Forgive you? I love you a thousand times better than ever. You deserve it, and shall never leave me again.

Fred. No, uncle; never, never. [*turning his eyes he sees Peter. and takes him by the hand*] If you had seen the misery of this poor man and his children! if you had been the cause of their distress!

Pet. 'Twas I, 'twas I myself; why did I let you climb upon my seat, or leave you to manage a pair of fiery horses? But who could refuse you any thing? I could not, though the carriage were to run over me. So mark, master Frederick, never ask any thing improper again; I should agree to it, I know; but I should go and drown myself directly.

Mr. V. Why didn't you write to me an account of all this suffering, instead of selling your watch, your books, and perhaps your clothes. It was, at least, an imprudence in a child like you, who cannot know the value of things.

Fred. That is true; but to let this family be a moment longer in distress seemed to me as still worse. Besides, as you had in a passion turned Peter away, I was fearful you would forbid my assisting him; and that, by disobeying your express orders, I should render myself still more blameable.

Mr. V. What, then, would you in that case have disobeyed me?

Fred. Yes, uncle; but in that only.

Mr. V. Kiss me, my brave Frederick. After all, there is one item in the letter which makes me hesitate; that is, sleeping away from home. Where did you pass the night?

Fred. On that day I carried the money to Peter. Our master was absent, and I knew that the doors

would be locked at ten o'clock that evening. I expected to be at home early enough, and should have been, if I had not lost my way after dark.

Dor. Poor brother! where did you go?

Fred. I found an empty shed, and there stretched myself upon a stone, and never slept better in my life. I felt happy, because Peter was relieved.

Mary. Ah, that ill-natured Richard! he took good care not to tell us this, and yet he knew it all.

Mr. V. From this moment I withdraw my regard from him, and you alone——

Fred. No, uncle; I shall not be happy at the expense of another, and far less at that of your son.

Dor. (*taking his hand.*) How much had I ought to love such a brother!

Mr. V. Well, let him remain at the school; you shall never leave me. I wish to have you near my heart, and will have teachers for you here of all sorts.

Pet. (*making a low bow.*) My worthy master! you are always the same.

Mr. V. (*patting him on the shoulder.*) Peter, has lord Vasty engaged you as his coachman?

Pet. Bless you, sir, I had no discharge to show.

Mr. V. You shall not need one. I shall make you and Frederick happy by being near each other once more. But never let him mount your seat again. We shall take care of your children too.

Pet. Dear master! are you serious? Is not this a dream? Frederick! master Frederick! shall my poor children——Ah, let me go and see my old friends in the stable!

THE THREE CAKES.

'COME, come,' said Mr. Bellamy to Albany his son, one beauteous summer morning, 'here's a basket with some cakes and currants in it. Let's be gone, and breakfast by the river side.'

'With all my heart, father,' said Albany, jumping about for joy. He took the basket in one hand, and with his other in his father's, hastened toward the river, which they soon reached. Walking on a little way, they arrived at a very pleasant spot.

Mr.B. Let's stop here, Albany; for this will yield us a delightful prospect, while we sit and eat.

Alb. But how are we to eat without a table?

Mr.B. Fortunately here's the trunk of an old tree that will serve for a table very well, if we need one; but you may eat your currants from the basket.

Alb. So I can; but how shall we supply the want of chairs?

Mr.B. Do you reckon this soft grass as nothing? See how thick it is painted with flowers. We will take our seat upon it; or perhaps you will rather choose the carpet?

Alb. Choose the carpet? Why you know, father, the carpet's fast nailed down upon the parlor floor.

Mr.B. It is true there is a carpet there; but still there is one here.

Alb. If there is, I don't see it.

Mr.B. Why, what's the grass but a carpet for the fields? And what a charming one? It is of a fresh color, and much more downy than any one we have How spacious too! it covers every hill, and all the level plain. The lambs repose upon it at their ease. Think, Albany, what they would have to suffer on a bare or stony piece of ground! their limbs are delicate, and could not but be quickly injured. They have mothers, but those mothers cannot make them soft feather-beds. God therefore has provided for them better than the poor sheep can, and spread them this soft couch, where they may roll about, or sleep at their ease.

Alb. And then, father, there's another good thing; they may eat it when they like.

Mr.B. I understand your meaning. So take your cake and currants.

Alb. O, how good! There's nothing wanting but a story while I'm feasting. Will you tell me one, father, the prettiest you may know?

Mr.B. With all my heart. Your cake reminds me of a story I can tell you about three cakes.

Alb. One, two, three cakes! What a charming story that must be! Pray tell it, father.

Mr.B. Come and sit by me then. Be wholly at your ease, and you'll hear the better.

Alb. I'm quite ready; so begin.

Mr.B. There was a little boy named Paul, about your age. His parents had lately fixed him at an academy. He was a smart boy; forever at his

book, and he happened once to get the highest place at exercises. His mother was told of it. She was delighted with the news, and it was that night the subject of her dreams. When morning came, she said to the cook,—'You are to make a cake for Paul, who yesterday was very good at school.'—'With all my heart,' replied the cook, and set immediately about it. It was as big as—let me see—as a hat, rim and all. The cook stuffed it with pistachio nuts, and candied lemon-peel, and iced it over with a coat of sugar, so that it was very smooth and perfectly white. The cake no sooner came from the oven, than the footman was despatched with it to school. When Paul first saw it he jumped up and down like a Merry Andrew. He was not patient enough to wait for a knife, but fell upon it tooth and nail. He ate and ate till school began, and, after school was over, he ate again: At night too it was the same till bed-time. Nay, a little fellow Paul had for a playmate told me, that he put the cake upon his bolster when he went to bed, and waked, and waked a dozen times, that he might take a bit. I cannot easily believe this last particular; but then it is very true that on the morrow, when the day had hardly broke, he set about his favorite business once again, continuing it all the morning, and by noon had ate it up. The dinner-bell now rung, but Paul had no appetite, and was vexed to see how heartily the other children ate. It was however worse than this at five o'clock, when school was over. His companions asked him if he

would not play at cricket, taw, or kites. Alas, he could not; so they played without him. In the mean time Paul could hardly stand upon his legs; he went and sat down in a corner very gloomy, while the children said to each other, 'What's the matter with poor Paul, who used to skip about, and be so merry? See how pale and sorrowful he is!' The master himself came, and was quite alarmed. It was lost labor to question Paul. He could not speak a single word. By great good luck, a boy at last came forward who was in the secret; and his information was, that Paul's mother had the day before sent him a great cake, which he had swallowed in an instant as it were; and that his present sickness was occasioned only by his gluttony. The master sent for the doctor, who ordered him a quantity of physic. Paul, as you may fancy, found it very nauseous and bitter; but was forced to take the whole of it, for fear of dying, which would otherwise have happened. After a few days had passed, during which physic was given and strict regimen observed, his health was re-established as before; but his mother protested she would send him no more cake.

Alb. He did not merit so much as the taste of such a thing. But this is only one cake, father; and you said there were three cakes in your story.

Mr.B. Patience! I am now going to tell you about another cake.

Paul's master had another scholar, and his name was Francis. He had written a very pretty letter

to his mother, and it had not a blotted stroke in it. In recompense for this neat performance, she sent him a large cake; and Francis thus addressed himself: 'I will not, like that glutton Paul, eat up my cake at once, and be sick as he was. No, I'll contrive that my pleasure shall last a great deal longer. He took the cake, which he could hardly lift, and watched for an opportunity of slipping up into his chamber where his box was, in which he put it under lock and key. At playtime every day he stole away from his companions, went up stairs on tiptoe, cut a tolerable slice from the cake, swallowed it, again locked up the remainder, and then came down and joined his companions. He continued this clandestine business all the week; and even then the cake was hardly half consumed. But what ensued? The cake at last grew dry, and then quickly became mouldy; nay, even maggots got into it, and by that means had their share; on which account it was finally not fit to eat, and our young curmudgeon with great reluctance was compelled to throw the rest away. No one however grieved for him.

Alb. No indeed; nor I, father. What! keep a cake locked up seven days together, and not give one's friend a slice! That's monstrous! But please to tell me about the third cake.

Mr. B. There was another little gentleman, who went to school with Paul and Francis, whose name was Gratian. His mother sent *him* a cake one day, because she loved him, and he loved her very

much. It was no sooner come than Gratian thus addressed his young companions: 'Come and look at what my mother has sent me; you must every one eat with me. They scarcely needed such a welcome piece of information twice, but all got round the cake, as you have doubtless seen the bees resorting to a flower newly blown. As Gratian was provided with a knife, he cut off a great piece, and then divided it into as many shares as he had collected boys together by such a courteous invitation. He ranged his young friends in a circle, and, beginning with the boy that stood next to him, he went round, distributing to each his portion, till the shares were all bestowed. Gratian then took up the rest, and told the boys he would eat his piece next day. He then went to play with his companions, who were all solicitous that he should choose whatever game he liked.

They had scarcely played a quarter of an hour, when a poor old man, with a violin, entered the yard. He had a long white beard, and, as he was blind, a little dog went before and guided him, having a collar round his neck, to which a cord was fastened, one end of which was held by the poor blind man. It was noticed with what admirable dexterity the little dog conducted him, and how he shook a bell that hung below his collar, when he came near any one, as if he had designed to say by such an action, 'Don't run against my master, nor knock him down.'

The old man, after coming into the yard, sat

down upon a stone ; and, hearing several children talking around him, 'My dear little gentlemen,' said he, 'I'll play you all the pretty tunes I know, if you will give me leave.' The children said they should be very glad to hear him. He put his violin in tune, and then thrummed over several jigs and other scraps of music, that it was easy to conjecture had been new in old times.

Gratian saw, that, whilst he played his merriest airs, a tear would now and then run down his cheek ; he therefore asked him why he wept ? 'Because,' said the musician, 'I am very hungry. I

have no one in the world to give my dog or me any thing to eat. I wish I could work, and get for both of us a bit of something; but I've lost my strength and sight. Alas! I labored hard till I was old, and now want bread.'

The generous Gratian, upon hearing this, wept too. He said not a word, but ran to bring the cake he had designed to eat himself. He brought it out with joy, and, as he ran along, said, 'Here, old man, here is some cake for you.' 'Where?' replied the poor musician, feeling with his hands; 'where is it? for I am blind and cannot see you.' Gratian put the cake into his hand; and, laying his fiddle on the ground, the old man wiped his eyes and began to eat. At every piece he put to his mouth, he gave a portion to his faithful dog, who came and ate out of his hand; and Gratian, standing by him, smiled with pleasure at the thought of having fed the poor old man when he was hungry.

Alb. O the good, good Gratian! Let me have your knife, father.

Mr. B. Here it is, Albany; but for what purpose?

Alb. I'll tell you, father. I was so pleased in listening to you, that I have only nibbled a little of my cake. I'll now cut it smooth. There, see how well I've done it! These scraps, together with the currants, will be more than I shall want for breakfast: and the first poor man I meet in going home, shall have the remainder, even though he should not play upon the fiddle.

THE DESERTER.

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MOORHOUSE, *an Innkeeper.*	THOMAS, *Brother to Moorhouse*
GRACE, *his Wife.*	SYEWARD.
GEORGE, *their son, a Corporal.*	CAPTAIN.
TRUNNION, *his Comrade.*	SERJEANT.

During the two first acts, the scene is the Innkeeper's house; changes to a prison in the last act.

ACT I.

Grace spinning with a distaff and spindle. Enter Moorhouse, who says:—

ERE is a soldier coming, Grace.

Grace. (letting her spindle fall.) A soldier! What are we to do? Our trade gone, and a soldier quartered upon us!

Moorh. It is not likely he will help us, yet perhaps he may have more compassion on our poverty than richer folks. A soldier's character, my dear, is much misrepresented; he has far more conscience than a steward,

who is hardened and oppresses the poor by dint of habit, whilst a soldier is thinking of another life, because he has death always before him.

Enter Trunnion.

Trun. Save you! I am come to be your guest. Here's the billet: it is for two. Another is coming.

Moorh. We would entertain you, soldier, with all our hearts, but we really have not the means. We keep a public house, yet custom is so dead that we cannot renew our license, which soon expires. We signified this circumstance to justice Parsons in the neighborhood, and begged that no soldiers might be sent to this house; but he answered, that, till our license expired, we must be considered as innkeepers, and take the consequences. Indeed, we have now hardly a single customer: the house is deserted, and our stock of liquor out to the very last drop.

Trun. But, for pity's sake, tell me, my good people, how do you live without a fire?

Gra. When one has no fuel nor money to buy it—

Trun. I must have some fire to warm me, and a little dinner too. Have you any thing to give me?

Grace. Nothing; not so much as bread. We live from hand to mouth; and, when we get one meal, cannot tell when we shall have another. If you disbelieve me, take a look about the house, and see if you discover aught but poverty in it.

Trun. No, no; I believe and pity you. I have a little money in my pocket, which I cannot do better than share with you. My good friend, here is a shilling and some halfpence; go and buy us some-

thing to eat; you shall take a bit along with us; but first, we want a little wood.

Moorh. You are very kind; I will run immediately. [*Exit.*

Trun. And in the mean time, with your leave, good madam, I will examine my arms.

Grace. With my leave, my good friend? Do what you please; you are welcome.—(*Aside.*) My husband was right; soldiers are much better christians than too many gentlefolks.—(*To Trunnion.*) My son is likewise a soldier.

Trun. In what regiment?

Grace. Colonel Sheffield's.

Trun. What is his name?

Grace. George Moorhouse. Heaven knows if he be alive. I have not heard of him these four years.

Trun. Do not be uneasy, he is still living.

Grace. Dear sir, do you know him?

Trun. (embarrassed) I can't tell that; but I suppose he is living, as he came of such good folks.

Grace. Ah, that's no reason.

Trun. But I wish your husband were returned. If I had the wood, I would make a fire. My comrade is rather boisterous, and will be angry if he do not find all things ready when he comes.

Grace. O, you will excuse us. A good word from you will pacify him.

Trun. Words will not do with him, and besides he is a corporal. I must not speak to him as I please.

Enter Moorhouse.

Moorh. (throwing down a faggot.) Here is

wood, and a nice bit of meat, besides turnips that a gardener gave me ; and here's some change left.

Trun. Keep that to buy us some small beer. I thought to have had a pint of porter ; but my family has increased, and my liquor must be weaker.

Grace. Come, my dear, open the faggot, and I will make a fire : the gentleman says, that his comrade is rather hasty.

Trun. Yes ; and, as a noncommissioned officer, he will expect things to be as they should be. He is giving orders in the company, otherwise he would have been here before now. Ah ! here he comes.

Enter George.

Geo. Well, is dinner ready? Make haste, good folks.

Moorh. It is not our fault, sir, that matters are not forwarder. Your comrade will inform you.

Trun. (*in a whisper to George.*) Come, finish this child's play, and tell them who you are.—(*To Grace.*) Examine this young man, good mother.

Geo. Don't you recollect me ?

Grace. (*after looking at George with attention.*) Heavens ! can it be George ?

Geo. Yes, yes, it is, dear mother ! What pleasure to behold you after such long absence !

Moorh. Is it possible ? my son ! O welcome, dear, dear boy, a thousand times !

Grace. (*embracing him.*) I see you then once more before I die ? Heaven be praised !

Moorh. And how have you contrived to live ? so many, my dear son, are dead, and you in safety !

Geo. Yes, and yet I have not been deficient in my

duty. I owe it certainly to your prayers, that I have escaped safe and sound from all dangers. I find I am quartered on you : Are you sorry for that ?

Moorh. Can you ask if we are sorry ! Since the day you left us, we have never been so happy.

Grace. (whispering to Trunnion.) My good friend, I think you told me something of a corporal ?

Trun. George is a corporal. Don't you see it ?

Moorh. Then you are promoted ! how came this ? You could not read.

Geo. My captain had me taught.

Moorh. O, what a charming man he must be !

Grace. Let them tell us now that soldiers are not special people !

Trun. I will answer for it, George will soon be higher than a corporal.—(*To George.*) But how came you not to tell me, when you saw the billet, that you were quartered on your father ?

Geo. I was so full of joy that I could not speak.

Grace. How long are you to stay with us ?

Geo. We halt here two days.

Moorh. I am glad of that, my dear boy ; we shall have time to talk of a few matters.

Trun. Well, I can see you have enough to talk about for these three hours ; therefore, mother, show me where to make the fire and dress the meat ; I will do the whole myself.

Gra. The least I can do is to help you, good sir.

Trun. No, no ; you have enough to do with George, so do but show me your kitchen.

Gra. Since you will have it so. (*They go out.*

SCENE II. *Moorhouse and George.*

Geo. Then, father, you are not at ease?

Moorh. At ease! O, no. Our custom has fallen from us, and, for these two years past, it is wonderful how we have subsisted.

Geo. But this is strange. You were formerly in a prosperous condition.

Moorh. You have reason to be surprised, knowing, as you do, how laborious we were, and that we did not manage like one half of our neighbors, who knew not how to lay by any thing against a rainy day. But we have had severe losses since you left us, and are indebted to our landlord upwards of four pounds. We cannot pay it, and the steward threatens to turn us out of doors, in which case we must beg our bread.

Geo. I did not think of finding you in such a sad situation.

Moorh. It would never have happened, had not the steward succeeded in making you a soldier. It was wholly his contrivance; I will tell you the particulars at some other time. When he was only a bailiff, and had scarcely a coat to wear, I refused to lend him money, and it was then that his enmity against us first began. And finally he has completed his revenge. Our ruin is accomplished, and you will not inherit a groat belonging to your father.

Geo. If you had something to subsist on, I should not regard myself. Here is all the money I possess. I give it you with tears of regret that I have no more.

Moorh. May heaven repay it to you a hundred fold, my dear child! This will keep us a few days.

Geo. Let me think a little. Can I speak with this steward.

Moorh. He will be here this very day.

Geo. Then I will tell him something that may do you good. The king is coming to review our regiment: you can go and tell him your sad situation.

Moorh. I go tell him! I should not be able to pronounce a word before him. I should stand stock still, or perhaps run away through fear and terror, were I forced into his presence.

Geo. Never fear; he would return you a kind answer. I was once a sentinel at Windsor on the Terrace, when the king was walking there. I shall never forget with what familiarity he spoke to people; but that's nothing. One morning, as he was walking through the town, he overtook a poor man's child, and, entering into conversation, found him such a clever little fellow, that he gave him a guinea. When the father heard of it, he watched several mornings, and at last obtained a sight of the king, and thanked him for the gift to his son; on which the king gave him another guinea for his gratitude.

Moorh. That was very kind.

Geo. Believe me, I had rather have to speak with him than many of our officers.

Moorh. What a good king!

Geo. There cannot be a better. Pray hear what I intend to do. I will get our quarter-master to

write me a petition ; and though you should have twenty miles to walk, it is worth the trouble.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Moorhouse, Grace, George, (standing near a table.)*

Grace. We have but two plates.

Geo. No matter, mother. Our provider will be with us very shortly.

Moorh. What a deal of pains he takes for us !

Geo. You don't know him yet ; next to fighting, he likes nothing half so well as cooking : here he comes.

Enter Trunnion, with the meat and turnips dressed.

Tru. Here, my friends. Here is what will warm our stomachs this cold weather. I have made a little broth ; and, take a soldier's word, you will find it excellent. Let us sit down ; but first say grace.—— Come, help yourselves. They say there is no eating broth without a spoon ; so here is mine. (*He takes a knife and spoon from his pocket.*)

Moorh. I am very glad of that ; we have but two.

[*They help themselves.*

Gra. (*to Moorhouse.*) The broth is excellent !

Moorh. I have not eaten so good for many years.

Geo. Do not spare it then. To say the truth, I have tasted worse.

Gra. We would never wish for better as long as we live : nay, nor yet so good, except on Sundays.

Geo. Well, let us now begin upon the meat.

Trun. (*to Moorhouse.*) But how is this, my friend, you have no plate ?

Gra. O, never mind ; one plate will serve us both.

Trun. Here is mine.

Moorh. By no means.

Trun. I can make myself a plate. [*He cuts a slice of bread, and puts his meat upon it.*] We should be finely off in camp if we waited for plates !

Geo. But, father, you do not eat ; what ails you ?

Moorh. Ah !

Trun. What makes you sigh ?

Moorh. I cannot help sighing, when I reflect, I should have treated George at my expense on his return, but was without a morsel of bread to give him.

Geo. Pray do not talk at this rate, father.

Trun. No, no, do not even think about it. Come, your health ! (*he drinks.*) Now you, good friend.

Moorh. (*taking the mug of ale.*) Come, here is our benefactor's health ; and many blessings on him for his kindness !

Grace. O, a thousand blessings !

Geo. Comrade, my hearty thanks to you for the friendship this day shown my parents !

Trun. Do you wish to make me proud ? You drink my health, as if I had won a battle !

Moorh. Ay, and you deserve we should. You have yourself but little, and part with it for our sakes. (*A knock without.*)

Gra. Who's there ?

Enter Captain and Sergeant

Geo. Our captain !

Serj. (*with a memorandum-book.*) How many are you here ?

Geo. Two. (*They all rise.*)

Capt. Very well. Do not stir: and you too, my good people, keep your seats, make no ceremony. I am glad to see so much harmony and cordiality among you. Have you (*to Moorhouse*) any complaint against these men ?

Moorh. O no, sir, if they are satisfied with us.

Capt. (*To George.*) Do you like your quarters ?

Geo. Sir, I am quartered with my father : it is my comrade's part to answer.

Trun. We have every thing that we desire.

Capt. (*to Moorhouse.*) What ! is this young man your son ? You are very happy then ; for I can tell you all the regiment love him. [*He looks round.*] I am afraid you are not in very easy circumstances ; but you are rich in such a son !

Geo. I thank you, captain, for reserving this favorable testimony of me for the ears of my parents, and I hope I may so demean myself that I may never forfeit the happiness it affords them.

Moorh. O, good sir ! my bosom overflows with joy.

Grace. We should be happier, captain, could you let him stay with us.

Moorh. What, wife, to die of hunger ? Would you think it, sir, this generous soldier, akho' a stranger to us, bought the dinner we have been eating, otherwise we should not have bread to give our son ? We have lost our custom ; besides which, our landlord, for about four pounds that we owe him——

Capt. Threatens perhaps to turn you out of doors? The case, alas, is too common; and I pity you sincerely. Here is a piece of gold that I chance to have about me: I hope it will be of some assistance to you. George, this is what your conduct has deserved; it is on your account I give it to your parents.

Geo. Ah, my generous captain! if you knew how serviceable this gift is, you yourself would say that I can never repay you as I ought.

Moorh. God only can repay such bounty.

Grace. May he grant you many years of happiness! If I had twenty children, I would resign every one of them to you with pleasure.

Capt. Good woman! you repay my kindness very much. One child is valuable to a parent, and you would give me twenty! But I interrupt your dinner. Farewell. If I can, I will come again and see you before we march. [*Exit.*

Serg. Trunnion, be ready for the next relief: the guard will turn out soon. [*Exit.*

Trun. (*drinking.*) Long live our noble captain!

Geo. So I say; for he has saved us from dying.

Moor. He never before saw us, yet gives us a piece of gold! Who would have thought that a stranger would pity our situation, when we are treated with so much barbarity by those who know us?

Grace. O, the blessed gentleman! but how much is it worth? (*looking at the piece of gold.*) It must be of pretty large value.

Moorh. O heavens! that I should ever stand in

need of a single piece of money! What is it? Do you know its value, George?

Grace. I never saw so large a piece of gold.

Trun. It is more, I am sure, than a guinea; but I cannot tell how much.—Stay, let me see it—I now recollect. It is what they call a six-and-thirty; there are many in circulation. They come from Portugal: it is worth nearly two guineas.

Gra. What! two guineas! almost half our debt: if the steward would take this in part, it might make the remaining payment easy to us.

Moorh. I hope he will give us a little time for the remainder.

Grace. Do you think that's likely? I should be content to live on dry bread till next winter, provided we were not obliged to leave our house.

Geo. Do not be uneasy, mother; I will try what I can do with him.

Gra. We stood in fear of soldiers, and a soldier is now our guardian angel!—God's good providence be praised for this repast, and the assistance that He hath sent us! *(They all rise.)*

Trun. Well, now I will put every thing away.

Grace. Yes, truly, if I would let you. Rest yourself: I will do that myself.

Trun. No, no; it is part of my employ. I will have you recollect the day we quartered in your little cot as long as you both live.

Grace. There is no resisting you. [*Trun. carries out the things.*] I am not surprised that the women are fond of soldiers; they make such good

husbands! they do all the work themselves, and with so much dexterity! but I must follow, or he will wash the plates. (*She is going, but returns.*) Ah! here is brother Thomas. Let us see if he will remember George.

Enter Thomas.

Grace. Brother, here is a young man come to see us. Don't take him, however, for a common soldier. Have you any knowledge of him? or you, George, have you? go to him, it is your uncle.

Geo. Just as if I did not recollect him!

Thomas. I your uncle?—let me see.—No—Yes—Yes, himself. My nephew, as I live!—[*They embrace.*] One need not ask about your health; you look so very well!

Geo. I hope, dear uncle, you are as well as I am.

Grace. I wish you knew how much his captain praises him! I wish I could stay and tell you; but I am forced to go, or I believe our cook would set the house to rights from top to bottom. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Moorhouse, Thomas, George.*

Tho. I rejoice, my dear nephew, with all my heart, to see you safe home: but trust me, if you have not heard the whole already, you could never have returned to find us more unhappy. We are all as poor as if the country had been pillaged.

Moorh. And our landlord's wicked steward would gladly, if he could, suck out the little blood that is left us.

Geo. You no longer need have any fear of him,

as you can pay down half the sum that you owe him. He must needs be patient, till such time as you can pay the rest.

Moorh. See, brother; see what George has got me.

Tho. [*to George.*] Did you save it from your pay, or is it plunder?

Geo. Neither one nor the other; it is a present from my captain, who was here just now.

Moorh. It is to George, however, that I am indebted for it; his captain gave it to me, because he had behaved himself so well.

Tho. In truth I am so much the better pleased; because a soldier, who would lay up such a deal of money from his slender pay, must certainly deprive himself of many little comforts in this life; and as to plunder, justify it how you will, it is always villanously got, and never prospers.

Geo. That's what I thought, and never went with marauding parties; indeed with all the pillage that others got, I found they were not richer than myself. They spent half their time in the black hole in punishment of some crime or other, after they had been robbing, for it is nothing else; one crime led to another; whereas my officers were never troubled with complaints against me.

Tho. I believe you. All your family are honest people; and you would not, I am sure, be the only good-for-nothing fellow of the number. We are poor indeed; but have the fear of God before our eyes and that is much better than the greatest riches.

Moorh. Yes; and if the steward——

Tho. Softly, brother; here he comes.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Well, Moorhouse, to-morrow is just at hand. You are ready, I suppose, to pay your rent, or quit your house?

Moork. I cannot, my good sir, pay more than half; nor should I have been able to do that, if providence had not assisted me. Be so indulgent as to wait till harvest for the rest, and do not complete my ruin by distressing me still further than I am distressed already.

Stew. By distressing you! the common cant: the more one does, the more one may, for such as you. How long, pray, has this rent of yours been growing? yet my lord distresses you! and why? because he tells you that he will have his money?

Moork. But is half what we owe him nothing? Take that half, let me beseech you, and entreat my lord in our behalf.

Stew. Yes, entreat him to let you lead him by the nose another twelvemonth? I shall not do so: therefore pay the whole; or else I seize, that's certain.

Geo. A little mercy, my good sir; and think that, with a single word, you have it in your power to make my father happy. If nothing goes unpunished in this world, it is no small matter to reduce an honest man to beggary.

Stew. Mind your musket, and not my affairs.

Geo. My musket, sir, belongs to the king, and I shall take care of it without your instructions; if

the king were here present, he would not take it amiss that I spoke a word for my parents, and yet, I think, there is some difference between you and him.

Stew. Mr. Soldier, you may have seen some service, as they call it; but remember, that you are not now talking to some boor whom you have plundered, and have at your mercy.

Geo. I never talked to any man as, I think, I should to you, were I to meet you in an enemy's country, now that I know your disposition.

Stew. You will never have that satisfaction.

Thom. Excuse a soldier's bluntness, good sir.

Stew. Hold your tongue likewise. I have you down on my papers, I believe.

Thom. I am sure you have; and not me only, but all honest people.

Stew. What do mean by that?

Enter Grace and Trunnion.

Grace. The steward here!

Moork. Be quiet, wife.—Let me beg of you, Mr. Steward, for heaven's sake——

Stew. All your prayers are useless; and to-morrow you shall set out on your travels.

Grace. You will surely have some pity on us. We shall soon get employment. Here is half your money, and the house will still be standing for the other half, if we should break our word.

Stew. Still standing! you may burn it; but, if not, I must obey the orders of his lordship.

Geo. Has his lordship ordered you to ruin a whole family for what my father owes him? You are

paid to take what care you can of his affairs; but, by proceeding as you would in this case, you do not earn your wages. Therefore take my counsel, and for once fulfil your real duty.

Stew. Will you tell me my duty? you may keep your counsel to yourself; that's what I tell you.

Geo. And you, I tell you, may be civil.

Stew. Who taught you all this impudence?

Trun. Suppose yourself a moment in this young man's situation. He is a soldier, and knows what he has to say; a thousand times better, at least, than any steward. You have dared, before his face, to tell his father that he shall 'go upon his travels.' We all know the meaning of that phrase; and would you have him stand there like a post, not having the spirit to open his lips? Who could restrain his feelings, if he saw his family on the point of being ruined by an ill-natured cur of your stamp? We know what stewards are, and how they make their fortunes. This young man spoke to you civilly at first, and you slighted him. He has now a right to tell you the truth.

Stew. This is past bearing. [*Turns in a violent rage towards Moorhouse.*] Are you disposed to pay? I ask you once more.

Moor. I have told you it is not in my power.

Grace. And offered you the little that we have.

Stew. I will have the whole or nothing. If it is not sent to-morrow, you shall hear from me.

Geo. [*stopping him.*] Once more——

Stew. Let me go. I'll have nothing to do with such a ragamuffin.

Geo. [*striking him*] Ragamuffin! You are speaking to a soldier, sir; take that: and out with you. Old rascal! get you gone! [*Pushes him out.*]

Stew. O, vengeance! vengeance! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Moorhouse, Grace, Thomas, George, Trunnion.*

Gra. George, my dear boy, what have you done!

Moorh. We are ruined.

Geo. Do not be frightened, father. Had you wept blood, he would not have relaxed. I never struck a man before; but I was never called a ragamuffin in my life till now. Could I be a soldier, and have tamely borne such words?

Trun. If you had not struck him, I was ready to strike you.

Moorh. Who knows what it may cost us?

Geo. What, because I would not be insulted?

Grace. It was very wrong in you; for, notwithstanding the insult, you should have recollected that he is my lord's steward.

Geo. He is not the first of his profession who has undergone a soldier's vengeance. For my part, I think it perfect sympathy, that, when a soldier sees a rogue, he naturally knocks him down.

Grace. I can't help thinking we should have softened him at last.

Geo. No, trust me, never.

Grace. (*to Moorhouse.*) What think you, my love? It is best for us to go after him.

Geo. It will be useless.

Moorh. That may be; but I am resolved it shall not be said that I have left any means untried. So, Grace, let us go together.

Geo. Well, since you will go, let it be so; and, if he yields, I shall be agreeably disappointed.

Moorh. Come, wife, let us try the only method left us; and Heaven's will be done, if it should fail.

Grace. Sure, since we have struggled thro' life thus far, Providence will not let us perish at last.

Trun. Your mother, I see, has all her necessary consolations ready when she needs them. I must go on duty with our comrades. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *George, Thomas.*

Geo. Do you think, uncle, that, by my behavior, I have exposed my parents to greater malice from the steward than they have already suffered?

Tho. I fear you have, although it was bad enough before. And yet, nephew, they might have mended their affairs last week, if they had had a little less compassion.

Geo. How, dear uncle?

Tho. They discovered a deserter, but would not inform against him, notwithstanding the reward.

Geo. Indeed!

Tho. The blacksmith here hard by was not so scrupulous, and got the money.

George. [*to himself.*] A deserter! a thought

strikes me.—[*To Thomas.*] Uncle, I can save my father, if I please ; but must have your assistance. May I trust you ?

Tho. Certainly.

Geo. But can you keep a secret ?

Tho. I have always thought I could.

Geo. Whatever happens ?

Tho. Yes, provided there is no wickedness in it.

Geo. None, uncle.

Tho. Well then, speak.

Geo. But were you to betray me !

Tho. It must surely be some extraordinary matter?

Geo. Yes ; but you will have no reason to fear any thing.

Tho. Well, then, to the purpose.

Geo. I will desert this very night. You shall secure me, and get forty shillings by it, which will nearly pay my father's debt.

Tho. I fancy you are turned fool ! What, I apprehend you ? I, your uncle ? Why not bid me take a musket, and shoot you at once ?

Geo. There is no musket in the case. A soldier is never shot the first time that he deserts.

Tho. Well, at least, he is flogged severely.

Geo. But I need not fear even that ; for all the officers love me, and I shall be pardoned.

Tho. No, no, I cannot consent. Suppose your father was to know it ?

Geo. Can he know it, if we keep the secret ? For deserting, as I have told you, I shall not be shot. Were there any room to fear it, I have often risked

my life to benefit my country; surely then I can risk it to benefit my father. Think too, he is your brother, and that in this way only we can save him and my mother from beggary, and perhaps from death.

Tho. The evil one has surely brought me into this temptation. I know not what resolution to take.

Geo. Remember, you have promised; will you break your word? In my despair I shall desert, and then my father will get nothing by it; so that you have no affection for your family, if you refuse.

Tho. No affection! You hold a knife before me, and are ready, as it were, to stab me to the heart.

Geo. Well, uncle, take your choice. Time presses.

Tho. But should you deceive me, nephew! Should your sentence be——

Geo. Of death, I have told you there is no fear. At worst it cannot exceed a whipping. I know how to suffer; and, at every lash, I shall rejoice that I have saved my father.

Tho. Well then, I consent to do as you direct; but, should matters fall out otherwise——

Geo. How can they happen otherwise than I have stated? Give me your hand, and be secret. Our sergeant calls the roll, as we term it, at six o'clock, and he who does not answer has his name marked and reported to the officers as a deserter. You shall conduct me to the guard-room to-night, and tell them that you apprehended me ten miles out of town, as I was deserting from the regiment.

Tho. It will be the first deceit I ever practised.

Geo. Do not reproach yourself with it, dear uncle,

since it will secure to us both so great a blessing Let us embrace once more ; and now go, find my father. But take care ! let me conjure you not to cause suspicion. If I am doing wrong, God will assuredly forgive me. What should not a grateful child do for the preservation of his parents !

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A prison. Drums and other music at a distance.*

Trun. [*coming in.*] O, my poor dear George ! He should have told us his distress about the steward, and not thus deserted. Who would have imagined it last night ? To have gone off, been apprehended, and suffered his punishment, all within the compass of a single night and morning ! But it is over, and I am glad of it. He has borne it like a hero, and never uttered a groan ; the regiment, that loved him so well hitherto, will, I am sure, not love him the less for it ; for my part, I would have gone through half the punishment for him. But here he comes.

Enter George and a Sergeant.

Geo. [*lifting up his hands and eyes.*] Thank heaven ! it is done, and my father is safe !

Serg. [*in surprise, aside.*] His father is safe. what does the man mean by that ?

Geo. Dear Trunnion !

Trun. [*embracing him.*] O, my dearest friend how fares it with you ?

Geo. Do not shed tears for my sake, comrade; I am much happier than you think.

Serg. [*aside.*] Again—what can he mean?—[*To George.*] Shall I go and bring our surgeon?

Geo. No, sergeant, I thank you.

Serg. [*aside, shaking his head.*] There is some mystery in this; he may be out of his wits. I'll tell my captain what I think of the affair. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *George, Trunnion.*

Trun. Well, at least take something to support you. [*giving him a glass of wine.*]

Geo. Thank you heartily, good friend. [*drinks.*]

Trun. I am rejoiced that the court martial, in consequence of our request in your behalf, remitted a part of your sentence. But tell me, comrade, what possessed you to desert?

Geo. I am ashamed, dear Trunnion, to conceal the reason from you; therefore, do not ask me; it is a secret that I never can mention.

Enter Thomas, violently, agitated.

Tho. Well, are you now satisfied?——

Trun. Softly! softly! You seem agitated. Do not disturb your nephew; he needs rest. A man is not always the same.

Geo. [*whispering to Thomas.*] You are angry, uncle. Should you speak of the affair between us, you will undo us.

Tho. I am undone already.

Geo. Are you serious?—[*To Trunnion.*] Prithee, my good friend, leave us a moment. [*Trunnion goes aside.*]

Tho. Your father is in so great a passion that he will not see me, on account of my having informed against you, and received the money. What is worse, he will not accept a farthing of it. When I offered it to him, he rejected it with horror. 'God forbid!' said he; 'it is the price of my son's blood.' What shall I do? There is scarcely a boy in the village who will not pelt me for my treachery, as they call it; and all through you.

Geo. Be pacified, dear uncle; every thing will yet be well. The worst is past; and you have only

to go back, and tell my father that I desire to see him.

Tho. No, not I ;—he won't permit me to approach him. I told you so before. But I see him and my sister both coming.

Enter Moorhouse and Grace.

Grace. Where is my son ? Let me see him.

Trun. This way, good mother ; here he is.

Gra. [*running to George.*] What have you done, my son ? How could you cause us all this sorrow ?

Moorh. [*in great anger.*] Are you here, unhappy wretch ? You have yourself converted all the joy that you gave me yesterday into distress and sorrow. I will never see you more.

Geo. Dear father, pray forgive me ! I have undergone my punishment.

Moorh. Yes, for flying from your colours ; but you have not been punished for disgracing us in our old age. Sixty years, passed without a blot upon our characters, entitled us to hope that we should die without a blemish ; yet you have now covered us with infamy. But we renounce you !

Geo. Pardon, pardon me, dear father ! Heaven is my witness, that I have not disgraced you, nor wished your dishonor.

Tho. [*aside.*] What torture to hear this, and yet be forced to stand silent !

Geo. [*following Moorh.*] Do not, father, leave me thus, without embracing me ! Stay, one moment ! And you, mother, can you show yourself so cruel ?

Grace. What can I do, son ?

Moorh. Never call him son. He has forfeited the name.

Gra. Forgive him, good man! he is still our child.

Tho. Yes, brother, let your heart be moved to pity his affliction.

Moor. Hold your peace! You are equally as bad as he; you that sell your nephew for money. I will no more be your brother, nor his father.

Gra. [*after talking with George.*] Hear me, husband! He makes solemn promises. Do not make us both wretched! He is our child, the only one that we have, and can we then not love him?

Moorh. Don't say one word more, woman, but follow me. [*He is going out, but is held by Trunnion.*]

Trun. Come, master Moorhouse; enough! You have vented your passion; let all be forgotten. The king accepts him again; why should not you? Give him your hand. Do you think that I should still have a regard for him, if he did not deserve it?

Gra. Hear that, my love! Do not be more hard-hearted towards him than strangers are. Consider what his captain said yesterday in his praise.

Moorh. I see him coming. To satisfy you, I will consult with him before I answer.

Enter Captain and Sergeant.

Moorh. Ah, sir, does it not afflict you, when you recollect that yesterday you spoke highly in honor of my unworthy son?

Capt. He had deserved it; I could not, however, have imagined that my commendation would have had such bad effects. But [*to George*] tell

me, what possible inducement had you to desert? Your motive must have been a very urgent one. Whatever may be the consequence, let me know the secrets of your heart. You have been punished, and have therefore nothing to fear.

Geo. My worthy captain, I beseech you, withdraw not your favor from me! I will endeavor to deserve it.

Capt. If you tell the truth, I will not. But to think that you deserted on account of a quarrel, which I understand you had with the steward, is absurd.

Geo. And yet, your honor may be assured, there is no other reason. It is well known, I never was remarkable for quarrelling with any one. The least offence appears enormous, when one has not been accustomed to it. I was so disturbed by the affair that it took away my reason; besides which, the unhappy situation of my father aided to distract me.

Capt. What then signified the words, that you uttered on entering the prison with the sergeant? 'Thank heaven, it is over, and my father is safe!'

Moorh. [*astonished.*] Were these his words? God forgive me, but satan must have turned his brain.

Geo. [*sighing.*] I do not remember my having said those words.

Serg. I remember to have heard you say them, when you first entered this room.

Trun. Yes, comrade. I now recollect that I also heard you utter them.

Geo. They must then have escaped me from the pain of my wounds.

Capt. They might so; yet they are not without a meaning.

Geo. [*in great embarrassment.*] I do not know what answer to make you.

Capt. [*taking George by the hand.*] Do not, my honest fellow, study to deceive us. This desertion has some other reason than your quarrel. Your dissimulation displeases me very much; and may entirely alienate my friendship. Was it not on account of your father——

Geo. [*eagerly.*] How, sir? Do not believe——

Capt. I see, you are not worth the trouble I am taking for you, and no longer wish to be informed of any thing about you. You are as indifferent to me as the worst of men. You do not know, perhaps, how much you have lost by this prevarication.

Tho. I must tell the truth then, at last.

Geo. [*interrupting him.*] Dear uncle, would you wish to make us more unhappy than we are?

Tho. [*to the Captain.*] I could explain the whole affair, sir; but have reason to fear lest the mischief should become still greater.

Capt. No, you have nothing to fear; I give you my promise of exemption from further punishment.

Tho. Well then, sir, it was to save his parents that he deserted. He persuaded me to turn informer, and thus procure forty shillings, that his father might have wherewithal to pay his debts; but his father will not now hear a word about the money nor about his son. Let me therefore beseech you, sir, to receive this money; and interpose, either

with your authority or kindness, that my brother may be benefited by what his son has affectionately done for him ; for the mystery is exactly as I have related it. [*Every one appears astonished.*]

Capt. George, what do you say to this ?

Geo. [*bursting into tears.*] You have heard the truth, sir. I beseech you, however, to believe that nothing, except my father's safety, could induce me to desert my colors. I despised the danger, hoping to save my parents ; but, since my designs are discovered, and hopes lost, I must suffer more severely.

Moorh. [*embracing George.*] What, dear George ! was it for my sake all this was done ?

Grace. [*embracing him also.*] Yes, now indeed we may embrace him, although my heart always told me that he could not be guilty.

Capt. [*taking George by the hand.*] My generous youth ! what affection and what courage ! Yet, to say the truth, your filial piety has carried you too far ; for desertion is an enormous crime.

Moorh. Most certainly ! Heaven preserve me from becoming richer by a farthing of this money !

Geo. There, uncle, see what comes of confession ! I have made myself a double criminal to get money for my father, which you find he will not accept.

Tho. Yes, I acknowledge this may be laid to my charge ; but your commander promised to hold us blameless, if we would tell the truth.

Capt. [*to Thomas.*] Let your brother have the money. Take it, my good friend [*To Moorh.*] ; for George has richly deserved it.

Moorh. I can never satisfy my feelings in receiving such ill-gotten gains.

Capt. I *will* have you take it! and what is more, I will go and relate the matter to our colonel. [*To George.*] You have not done your duty as a soldier, I acknowledge; but have shown yourself a son in a manner, that he cannot but be moved when informed of it. Wait for me: I will return immediately. [*Ex. Captain and Sergeant.*

SCENE III. *Moorhouse, George, Thomas, Grace, and Trunnion.*

Geo. My consolation is, that now I can with greater confidence intreat your forgiveness, as your misfortunes are now ended, and the steward will not have it in his power to hurt you.

Trun. Yes, my good old man, forgive your son! His wounds will be cured the sooner, if he have your blessing: besides which, you ought to consider that he is to possess your cottage after you.

Moorh. He is; and I will preserve it for him. Come, my son, forgive your father, who has used you very unkindly! You can scarcely conceive how much I suffered, from the thought that you had deserted your colors; yet it seems you were even then discharging your duty towards me. How shall I repay you for so much affection, in the little time which I have to live?

Geo. By loving me, as you always have done.

Grace. O yes! and ten times more; for every

morsel of bread that we eat, we can say, 'It is our dear son's gift.'

Geo. I am now happy. And I thank you, uncle, for the service you have done me.

Tho. You thank me, do you? I am glad that matters have turned out as well as they have. But, I pray you, never make such another ticklish experiment. And now, brother, have you still a grudge against me? Had it not been from a wish to serve you, I would not have been concerned in my nephew's scheme; and he would not have undertaken it except from the same praiseworthy but rash intention. As you have pardoned him, and all is likely to end well, you may extend your liberality to me.

Moorh. What can excuse your conduct, brother? I may throw myself into the flames, but he that lights them for me ought to be considered cruel. However, I will not hate you; there is my hand.

True. Comrade, hitherto I have loved, but now I respect you. Let us embrace then, and always be friends.

Enter Captain.

Capt. Good luck, George! you are a sergeant on the spot. The colonel, when I told about the affair between your father and yourself, was happy to promote you. Take this also from him [*giving him a purse of money*] as a witness how much he applauds your filial piety.

Moorh. & Grace. O, sir, may heaven reward you!

Capt. Nothing is due to me ; the colonel has done every thing.

[George embraces his parents, and then, turning to the Captain, says]

Geo. Sir, I most humbly ask your pardon !

Capt. You richly deserve the pleasure of embracing those who gave you birth, and to whom you have so well discharged the obligations of a dutiful son !

Tho. Well, who could have thought that old Thomas, simple as he is, would arrive at the honor of making a sergeant, as, it is plain, I have ?

Trun. Yes ; and therefore, Mr. Sergeant——

Geo. Call me nothing but comrade and friend, as we have ever been.

Trun. Well then, comrade, let us break off for the present ; and, as nothing suits a joyous time like good cheer, let us, as soon as we are able, make up for the sorrows of last night and this morning by a good breakfast. The captain and the colonel shall not be forgotten in our grace.

THE BLIND MAN'S BUFF.

A DRAMA IN TWO ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MR. MILNER.
ALFRED, *his Son.*
VIOLA, CLARA, } *his Daughters.*
The two masters DANBY, *Friends to Alfred.*
MARTIN, *their Acquaintance.*
ROGER, *Mr. Milner's Groom.*
ROSAMOND, BEATRICE, } *Friends of Viola and Clara.*
LAURA, *a little lame.*

SCENE. *An apartment in the house of Mr. Milner; a table, with books and papers upon it, and a speaking trumpet in in the corner.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Alfred, speaking to his father as he goes down stairs.*

NO, father, don't be afraid; I'll take the greatest care that no accident shall happen to your papers. I'll put your books in the closet. [*He comes forward, jumping for joy.*] We shall have some fine sport. 'When the cat's away, the mice will play.'

Enter Viola.

Well, Viola, has mother gone out, and all our little friends arrived?

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Vio. My three friends are all come ; but none of your companions yet.

Alf. O, I can easily believe you, sister. We don't go gadding like you girls : and so we are not forward in keeping appointments of this nature. You must force us from our study, if you would have us. I'd lay any wager the Danbys at least are hard at work, whilst we are speaking.

Vio. Yes, in contriving what fine tricks they can put upon us. But pray, Alfred, is it true that father will let us pass this evening here ? Our chamber above is so very small, we could scarcely find room to turn round.

Alf. Could my father refuse you any thing, when I undertook to ask it ? — Softly, little girl, don't discompose the papers. Let them lie.

Vio. Keep the advice, sir, for yourself ; I meant to lay them smooth.

Alf. [*with an air of importance.*] No, no, you can't, miss ; I am charged with that commission.

Vio. Truly, father could not have given it to so orderly a gentleman ! Let me, at least, assist you, and afterwards I'll put the chairs in order. These great books I'll remove first.

Alf. Don't think of touching them ! At most, I can permit you only to take one by one, and pile them up on my hands. [*She does so, till they reach his chin.*

Vio. There's full enough.

Alf. [*leaning backward.*] One more only.—So —I've now sufficient for one turn. [*He takes a step or two, when all the books fall.*]

Vio. [*bursting into a laugh.*] Ha, ha, ha! there they go! Those handsome books, father would never let us touch! I fancy he'll be greatly pleased to see them thus tumbled all together!

Alf. I had lost the centre of gravity, as my tutor says, and you know he is gravity itself. [*He picks up the books, but they fall down as fast.*] Deuce take it! They have been at Sadler's Wells, I think, and learnt to tumble!

Vio. You'll never finish, if I don't assist you. So, d'ye see, I'll spread my apron, and do you stoop down and pile them in it. [*Goes out.*

Alf. [*rising out of breath.*] Bless me! I should never do to live in that country where men go upon all-fours like monkies. [*Fans himself with his hat.*

Vio. [*re-entering.*] Could you see how neatly I have ranged them on the mantlepiece, you'd be charmed! So let me have the rest.

[Alfred puts the other books, and all the papers, in his sister's lap, who says, when she receives them,]

Well, every body must acknowledge that girls are cleverer than boys.

Alf. Yes, and you particularly. Clara is constantly employed in clearing away your shreds and rags.

Vio. And if your tutor had not his eye constantly upon you, you would never know where to find your exercises and translations. [*She looks about her.*] But I fancy now I've got them all.

Alf. Yes; there's nothing left; so you may go.

[Viola goes out.

Alf. [*putting the chairs and table in their pla-*

ses.] There, so that's done, and we shall now have elbow-room enough. I can't help thinking what fine work we shall make. However, I'm surprised they're not yet come. For my part, I can say, I hardly ever make any one wait for me when a visit is in the case,

Re-enter Viola, and looking round.

Vio. Aye, very well; but, brother, you must hide this speaking trumpet. If our friends should see it, they'll be sure to stun us with the noise.

Alf. I'll put it out of their way behind the door. Let your little friends come here now, and din me with their chattering, as they used to do, and we shall see who cries out loudest.

Vio. Nonsense! we need only join together; we should very shortly silence such a little thing as you.

Alf. O no; for if you ladies have your clappers well hung, we gentlemen possess a fine clear manly voice, which all respect: as thus—You hear me?

Vio. [*shrugging her shoulders.*] Yes; and have so much respect for you, as you say, that I'll take myself off. Farewell; I'll run and join my friends.

Alf. And bid the servant send up my visitors, when they arrive.

Vio. Yes, I will. [*She withdraws.*

Alf. [*taking up the speaking trumpet.*] Here's what has often brought me from the farthest corner of the garden, much against my inclination; and I think I hear it still—'So ho there! Alfred! Alfred!' —My young friends live only at the corner of the street. Let's see if I can hasten them. [*He puts*

the trumpet to his mouth, throws up the window, and cries out,]

Girls and boys, come out to play,
The moon doth shine as bright as day ;
Come with a whoop, and come with a call,
Come with a good will, or not at all.

[*He leaves the window, and draws near the door.*] Well, is not this surprising ! 'Tis like Harlequin's enchanted horn. I think I hear them talking to each other on the stairs. [*He listens.*] Yes ! the two Danbys certainly. [*He puts the trumpet away.*] Suppose I now jump on the table, and receive them sitting on my throne !

[He runs to bring a stool, that he may put it on the table; and prepares to take a spring; but the arrival of the two Danbys prevents him.]

Enter the two Danbys.

Alf. Could you not have staid a little at the door till I was mounted on my throne, that I might give you audience, as they say, in all my glory ?

Elder D. Good indeed, you've no occasion for a throne, to look exactly like a king. And, active as you are, the throne might very likely cause your majesty a tumble.

Alf. Why, to say the truth, I've read of many tumbles of that nature in my ancient history.

Elder D. And in some sort such an accident has happened to my brother; although he's no great monarch, and mounted no throne. He fell down stairs last week, and hurt his nose considerably.

Younger D. [*stuttering.*] Yes, in-dee-ee-eed !

It pains me sti-i-ill a little, and that ma-a-aster Martin is a very nau-au-aughty boy.

Alf. Does he intend to come to-night?

Elder D. I hope he don't; if we had thought he would be here, we should not have stirred out.

Younger D. He o-o-only thinks of mischief.

Alf. What has he done?

Elder D. We were both going out last Saturday. I stopped to get a handkerchief; my brother went down stairs alone, and, as it happened, Martin came out slily, jumped upon my brother, who became frightened, lost his footing, and rolled down the stairs from top to bottom.

Alf. Poor Danby! I'm sorry for you. Martin looks for all the world as if he loved such mischief. We shall have his company this evening for the first time. His father begged my father to let him come.

Eld. D. I am sorry. We no longer speak together.

Alf. My father supposed that you were good friends, because you all lived in the same house, and intended to give you the greater pleasure.

Elder D. The greater pleasure! We should like to have him ten miles off. Since he has been our neighbor, we have lived in constant uneasiness. He has frequently amused himself with breaking windows, and then tried to lay the blame on us.

Alf. Does no one complain of him to his father?

Elder D. I don't know what to think of his father. He seems to me be an odd kind of man. He scolds a little, pays the damage, and that's all he does.

Alf. If I were your father, I'd quit the neighborhood, and live somewhere else.

Elder D. Yes, so he intends to do, and therefore gave warning yesterday; and we're now forbid all connexion with this wicked Martin. Few people go by the house, without expecting some trick played or attempted. Sometimes he diverts himself with squirting puddle-water at, or pelting them with rotten apples. Nay, sometimes he'll fasten rabbits' tails, or bits of rags behind their backs, at which people who see them burst out a laughing. Then, too, he has what he calls his *caxen fishery.*

Alf. Caxen fishery!

Elder D. Yes; he'll take off the wigs or caps of people, as they pass him, with a hook, as you would catch a trout. When some poor man stops before his window to converse with some friend, Martin instantly goes up to the balcony, with a string suspended from a fishing-rod, and a hook at the end of it, with which he jerks off the poor man's wig. He next runs and ties it to a dog he has provided for the purpose; after which he drives the frightened creature into the street, who sets off with it, so that the poor perriwig has frequently been dragged through the mud, a long time before its owner can recover it.

Alf. But this is more than mere amusement.

Elder D. And yet this is nothing to the stories I could tell you. Why, he lames or bruises all the dogs that come near him. It is not long ago, when one of his relations broke his leg, by slipping

down stairs, where Martin had purposely scattered some peas. It is so, or my name is not Danby. As for hired servants, I am sure his father could not get any to live with him, if he did not pay them extraordinary wages.

Alf. I long to see him. I like boys a little merry.

Elder D. Nothing is more natural; but Martin's mirth is not like that of other children. You, I know, heartily love laughing; but for the world you would not hurt any one; whereas this wicked fellow laughs at bumps and bruises.

Alf. O that doesn't frighten me in the least. I shall be the better pleased in paying him as he deserves.

Elder D. If he should come, my brother won't offend you by withdrawing? He would do him some fresh mischief.

Younger D. Ye-e-es, I'll go.

Alf. No, no; we're old friends, and no new-comer shall divide us. I'll take care and manage him, I warrant you. But I hear a noise on the stairs.—It is Martin.—No, I see my sister and her company.

SCENE III. *Alfred, the two Danbys, Viola, Clara, Rosamond, Beatrice, Laura.*

Vio. Your humble servant, my good friends!—But why not seated, brother? you might easily have procured chairs for the young gentlemen. There has surely been time enough.

Alf. As if we did not know it is usual to receive the ladies standing.

Vio. I am charmed to find you know your duty.

But where's master Martin? [*To the Danbys.*] I supposed you would bring him along with you.

Elder D. It is a long time, thank heaven, since we have been separated from him.

Rosa. Is he more unlucky than Viola's brother?

Clara. [*archly.*] He would be certainly unlucky then, indeed!

Bea. Viola's brother? He's a very lamb to Martin; we have known him for a long time. Have we not, dear sister?

Lau. That we have; and he has played me many a trick.

Bea. He was very intimate with Anthony my brother; but he's rid entirely of him now. Why, this Martin is the sorriest fellow in the world.

Vio. O, as to that, my brother is even with him.

Rosa. But to do mischief merely for the pleasure of it—there's the evil.

Vio. No, no, my brother is much better than that.

Alf. [*with an air of irony.*] Do you think so, truly? I'm obliged to you!

Rosa. Well, my dear Viola, we'll be under your protection; you are the biggest of us, and, at present, mistress of the house, and may command him.

Vio. Don't be afraid. I'll keep him in due bounds.

Alf. Yes, Viola; you shall take care of the ladies; and for you [*to the Danbys*] I'll take you under my protection.

Eld. D. He'll hardly think of playing tricks with me. He knows me, I assure you. All I fear about is my brother.

Younger D. He makes ga-a-ame of me! yes a-a-always!

Lau. That's his way; the least are the ones he has to do with. He never vexes my sister—none but me.

Vio. I can believe you; such as he are always cowards: a puppy follows close upon a cat whilst she keeps running; but, if puss turn round, and show her whiskers, then the puppy scampers off.

Alf. Well then, sister, you shall be the cat.

Lau. And let him see your whiskers.

Vio. But methinks it would not be amiss if we sat down. Although we expect this Mr. Mischief-maker, we've no need, I fancy, to remain standing till he chooses to appear.

Alf. Hush! here he is.

Enter Martin.

Mar. [*to Alfred and Viola, making them a bow.*] Your father was pleased to invite me to wait upon you; so I'm come to spend the evening with you.

Vio. We are glad to see you, and shall have much pleasure in your company; at least my brother.

Cla. Yes, indeed; he needs some good example.

Alf. Do I? So your good example, you would have the gentleman suppose, is not sufficient?

Vio. Well, a truce to compliments. As mistress of the house, it is necessary I should introduce you to the company. This tall young lady, in the first place, is Miss Rosamond Ducane.

Mar. [*bantering.*] I'm charmed you tell me so.

Vio. And these are the Misses——

Mar. O, I know them very well. This here [*pointing to Beatrice*] is my lady what's her name? Pentweasel, who will take off the company, simple as she seems: And there [*pointing to Laura, and limping round the room*] is Miss Up-and-down, who broke her leg by running from the rod. This gentleman, [*the elder Danby,*] observe him, he's a grave, wise Grecian, that looks straight before him as he walks, as if he pitied us poor silly children. And this Peter Grievous, my good little friend [*showing the younger Danby, and letting fall his hat*] is 'squire A-a-atkinson, whose dear mamma forgot, poor creature! to untie his tongue when he was born.

[The children seem surprised, and gaze at each other.

Alf. And who am I, sir? for methinks you seem quite clever at this sort of portrait painting.

Mar. I'm not sufficiently acquainted with you yet to take your likeness; but I'll let you have it soon.

Vio. For you, sir, I could draw you at a glance; and, I must tell you, the similitude would not be very pleasing. I could not have supposed it possible that any well-bred gentleman, as I imagine you affect to be, should think of turning natural defects into a theme for banter. If my little friends were not sincerely such, they would have reason to reproach me for exposing them to your indecency. But they can see I could not have expected so much offence.

Mar. Why, Alfred, I protest your sister's mighty eloquent. You need not go to church on Sundays, having such a charming preacher in the house.

Alf. She's tolerably skill'd, when the truth is to be

told to any one; and it is on that account we love her both my sister and myself, with all our hearts.

Mar. Well, you see I'm likewise tolerably skilful in telling truth; and therefore you'll love me too, with all your heart. [*He bows to Viola.*] I ask your pardon, miss, for having taken your employment off your hands, who are so clever at it.

Vio. Your excuses and bows are both of them insults; but such insults as I despise. Were they sincere, they'd hardly make atonement for such coarse incivility. If I had not considered every word you spoke as meant in joke, however gross I might suppose it, I should know what was suitable for me to do, and have done it accordingly. Let me therefore beg, sir, that you will indulge in no more freedoms of this nature, if you intend we shall remain together.

Mar. [*somewhat embarrassed.*] I see you do not understand a little harmless piece of banter. Let's be friends. [*He holds out his hand.*]

Vio. [*giving hers.*] With all my heart, sir; but provided——

Mar. [*suddenly turning his back upon Viola, and addressing the younger Danby.*] You too are an honest little fellow, and I'll shake hands with you.

[Danby hesitates to give his hand, Martin therefore seizes it, and shakes it so rudely, that he cries..]

Elder D. Mr. Martin!——

Alf. [*laying hold of Martin's arm.*] Pray, sir, let this child alone; or——

Mar. Well—or what?—my little Jack-a-dandy.

Alf. [*boldly.*] I am little, I acknowledge, but yet strong enough; and you'll find me so when my friends require to be defended.

Mar. Say you so? In that case, I should like to be among them. But first, if you please, we'll have a tustle, just to see how you'll be able to defend them.

[Martin suddenly tries to throw him down; but Alfred stands firm upon his ground, and Martin falls. The company rush forward to part them.]

Alf. But one moment, if you please, young ladies. I'll not do him any harm. Well, Mr. Martin, how do you find yourself? I fancy I'm your master.

Mar. [*struggling.*] Take away your knee—or you'll stifle me.

Alf. No; you must not think of getting up, unless you first ask pardon.

Mar. [*furiously.*] Pardon!

Alf. Yes, sir, and of all this company, as you have certainly offended them all.

Mar. Well, well; I do ask pardon.

Alf. If you again insult us, be assured we'll send you down into the cellar till to-morrow morning, which will cool your courage. That's much better than to hurt you. We don't think you worth the trouble. [*He loosens his hold of Martin, and, when both are up, continues.*] You have no right to be offended; and remember, you began the game.

[Martin seems ashamed, and remains silent.]

Rosa. [*aside to Clara.*] I could not have supposed your brother half so valiant!

Cla. O, a lion is hardly bolder! and yet he

never quarrels. He is, in short, although I say it, the best-tempered little fellow in the world. [*Aloud*] But what are we about? We ought to think of some amusement for the evening.

Alf. Certainly; for what else have we all come together? Well, what play shall we have? Something funny. What say you, Danby?

Elder D. We will let the ladies choose.

[Martin makes mouths at Alfred and Danby; the rest pretend not to see him.]

Vio. There, Alfred; there's a lesson for you: we may choose! Well then, suppose we play at questions and commands? or possibly you like a game at cards much better?

Lau. I should rather play at something with the younger Danby. If you've picture books, we'll turn them over; won't we?

Younger D. O-o-oh, yes.

Vio. With all my heart, sweet dears. I'll carry you up stairs. You'll want for neither pictures nor playthings there.

[Laura and the younger Danby joyfully take hands.

Vio. [*to the misses.*] My friends, will you also go with me for amusement to my apartment? I've a charming bonnet you'll be pleased to look at!

All together. Yes, yes, yes; let's go.

Elder D. Will you accept of my hand as far as your apartment, Miss Viola?

Vio. Rather let Miss Rosamond or Miss Beatrice, if they think proper, have it.

[The elder Danby presents his hand to Beatrice, who happens to stand next to him.

Mar. What, do you mean to leave me here alone?

Alf. No, sir; the young ladies will excuse me. So 'll stay; but I'm obliged to leave you for a moment.

Mar. Are you? Then I'll follow you. I don't like to be left alone by night, in a house where I am a stranger.

ACT II.

Scene I. *Alfred and Martin.*

Mar. The truth is, I was apprehensive you might think of playing me some trick; therefore I accompanied you. But we are now returned; and, as we are alone, we may devise some mirth between us.

Alf. Very willingly; so let us think a little.

Mar. We must have some fun with little Danby.

Alf. If by *fun* you mean some trick to hurt him, I say no; I will do nothing in a joking humor; pray leave him out, if you are bent on mischief.

Mar. I was informed, you were always merry, and at heart loved something funny.

Alf. And so I do; but I wish it to be without injury to any one. However, let us know what sort of fun you had intended.

Mar. Look; here are two large needles. I will stick them with the points upward in the bottom of two chairs, where common eyes would not discern them. You shall next offer two of these young ladies the two chairs, for very likely they'd suspect I meant them mischief of some sort or other, and they

will naturally both sit down: but figure to yourself what strange grimaces they'll both make; ha! ha! It makes me laugh only to think what wry faces we shall have to look at! Ay, ay! and your prudish sister too will find the matter quite diverting.

Alf. But suppose I were to treat you in the same manner, would you like it?

Mar. O, treat me! that's different; but those little idiots——

Alf. You call them idiots, do you, because they are not mischievous?

Mar. You're mighty formal and precise. Shall I mention something else?

Alf. Yes, do.

Mar. Then I've some thread, as strong as whipcord in my pocket. I'll thread one of these great needles with a little of it; and, as soon as all of them have come down, one of us will go politely towards them, make a deal of scraping and bowing, while the other, keeping still behind, shall sow their dresses together. They'll want to dance, as you may guess; so up we'll come, and take them out. Ha! ha! you know the rest; ha! ha! ha! ha!

Alf. Yes, to tear their gowns, and anger their parents when they find it out?

Mar. Why, that's the beauty of it!

Alf. What! have you no pleasure in any thing but mischief?

Mar. But it does not injure me.

Alf. O ho! I understand: you think of no one but yourself, and all the world is nothing to you!

Mar. Well; we have come together to divert ourselves, and we must positively have some laughing. So suppose we frighten Laura and little Danby.

Alf. It's quite wrong to frighten any body. Suppose any one should frighten you?

Mar. With all my heart, if any one is able. I'm afraid of nothing.

Alf. [*aside.*] Say you so? That we shall perhaps try.—[*Aloud.*] Well, about this frightening?

Mar. I've an ugly mask at home. I'll run and fetch it. And do you, whilst I am gone, contrive to bring the little children down, and you shall see. I'll not be absent half a minute.

Alf. [*aside.*] Good!—the mask shall be for you. —[*Aloud, calling him back.*] But, Martin! Martin!

Mar. What's the matter?

Alf. It will be better to come upon them where we are, if I can bring the others down; for, when there are but two or three in this part of the house, there sometimes comes a spirit; and in that case, we ourselves should be badly off.

Mar. What is it you tell me about your spirits?

Alf. Yes; it is true. At first you hear a noise, and then a phantom with a lighted torch stalks by, and then the room seems all on fire. [*He starts back, as if afraid.*] Methinks I see it now.

Mar. [*a little frightened.*] See what?—O lord! —What can bring the phantom here?

Alf. [*drawing Martin toward a corner, and whispering to him.*] The reason, as we are told by the neighbors, is this: there was a miser lived here

formerly, and he was robbed one night of all his money. In despair he cut his throat, and now, it is said, from time to time his ghost appears.

Mar. [*trembling.*] O ho, I'll stay no longer here, unless you procure company.

Alf. But recollect how brave you were just now.

Mar. You must not fancy I'm afraid :—but—but—but—but—but—but I'll go fetch my mask.

Alf. Do ; I'll prepare things here. What pleasure we shall have ;

Mar. [*with a grin.*] O enough to make one die with laughing.

Alf. They'll be finely frightened.

Mar. That they will ! and therefore I'll make haste. I'm home, and back again—You'll see how soon. [*Martin goes out.*

Alf. Ah ha ! you want to frighten others, and are never terrified yourself ! Well, I've thought of something that will daunt you, or I am much mistaken.

SCENE II. *Alfred, Viola, Clara, Rosamond, Beatrice, and the elder Danby.*

Vio. We saw Martin run across the street this moment ; what's the matter ? Have you quarrelled ?

Alf. Quite the contrary ; he thinks I am his best friend. I have pretended to go shares with him in a trick he wants to play upon the little children ; but he will only trick himself, and never show his face here a third time.

Vio. Well, what is your project ?

Alf. You shall soon know. At present I have

no time to lose, for every thing must be in readiness at his return ; therefore, ladies, I will request permission to be absent for about five minutes.

Rosa. Yes, go ; but don't stay longer. We are impatient to know your design.

Alf. I shall consider it my duty to inform you perhaps, as soon as preparations are made. With your leave, therefore, once more. [*He goes out.*

Vio. Ah ! ah ! ah !—Two pretty fellows got together ! We shall see what good comes out between them ! one's well worth the other.

Elder D. O, Miss Viola, do not thus dishonor my friend your brother, by coupling him and this wicked Martin together.

Bea. You are in the right, Danby. One is all politeness, and the other truly savage.

Cla. Savage, however, as Martin is, I venture to say that Alfred will be found his master.

Rosa. What a piece of service would Alfred do, could he clear the house of such a fellow ! We shall have no pleasure this evening, if he stay among us.

Vio. I am afraid Alfred will proceed too far, and think himself justified in doing any thing against this Martin.

Elder D. He can never do enough ; and, although his scheme should be a little hard upon Martin, there will be instruction as well as reproof in it : it is the greatest service one can do him : and even his father, I am persuaded, will be pleased with Alfred, when he hears what pains he has taken to

reclaim his son. Alas! he would perhaps part with half his fortune, to render Martin like him.

Bea. Therefore, Viola, don't you attempt to thwart your brother's good intentions.

Vio. My dear Beatrice, I am very awkwardly situated. I am acting instead of my mother, and cannot possibly let any thing go forward, which she would disapprove.

Bea. Let Alfred have his own way. We will take the blame of what he does upon ourselves.

Cla. Yes, let him, sister. War, I say, eternal war with the wicked!

Alf. [*returning joyfully.*] I have settled every thing to my mind, and Martin may appear whenever he pleases. We'll receive him.

Vio. But I hope you'll tell me——

Rosa. Yes, we'll be in the plot too; and assist you, if we can.

Alf. No, ladies; it is not necessary. There's a little violence, I must acknowledge, in my plot; and therefore you ought not to be parties. I've arranged every thing with Roger in the stable. He conceives my meaning clearly, and will second it with his usual dexterity.

Vio. But still you do not acquaint me——.

Alf. This is all you need know of the contrivance. We will now play Blindman's Buff, that Martin may suspect nothing on his return. I'll suffer myself to be caught, and he or she who blinds me must take care that I have an opportunity of seeing through the handkerchief and fixing upon

Martin. After I have blinded him, you shall steal into the closet, taking away the lights, and leaving us together. When I want your aid, I'll call you.

Elder D. But if Martin should proceed to thresh you in your téte-a-téte ?

Alf. Proceed to thresh me ! You observed how easily I handled him. I am not afraid of him, for I have found him to be an arrant coward. So that is fixed : but first we must have both the little ones down stairs, or Martin will go up and frighten them whilst we are talking here together. So pray, sister, [*to Clara*] go and bring them down.

Cla. Yes, with pleasure. [*She goes out.*

Vio. Brother, I'm not certain I should permit—

Bea. What is the matter, Viola ? Let him do as he pleases.

Alf. Yes, sister, rely on my discretion. You know I do not like mischief for the sake of mischief. He shall not have half the punishment he merits, but escape with a little frightening : that is all the harm I mean to do him.

Vio. Well, Alfred, on your promise of discretion—

Alf. I promise no less. Now let us make haste and put the things in order, that all may be in readiness when he comes.

[They put away the chairs and table. Clara in the mean time comes down with Laura and Danby.

Alf. [*to Laura and Danby.*] Come, my little friends, into this closet ; but take care, and make no noise, or Martin very possibly will hear you.

Cla. I will conduct them. There's a book of pic-

tures in the closet: and I'll stay and show them such as they wish.

Lau. I thought the tea was ready, May we not stay here with you till it comes in?

Alf. I'll call you when the servant brings it; but at present you must go into the closet; Martin wants to frighten you, and I'll not let him.

Younger D. Ye-e-e-e-s; let's go, my de-e-e-e-ar.

[Clara takes a lamp, and goes with them into the closet.

Alf. We comprehend, I fancy, what we are to do. My eyes are not to be wholly covered, and, whenever I give the signal, you must take away the lights, go into the closet, and remain perfectly silent.

Rosa. Yes, we understand.

Alf. I believe I hear him coming. Hush! hush!

[He listens at the door.

Rosa. I'll begin; who takes my handkerchief?

[Beatrice blinds Rosamond, and they commence the sport.

SCENE III. *Alfred, Viola, Rosamond, Beatrice, elder Danby, and Martin.*

[Martin, as he enters, pinches Rosamond; she throws out her hands, and lays hold of him.

Rosa. It is master Martin. I well know him by his pinching me.

Alf. It is Martin; but he was not in the play. You must begin again.

Mar. Undoubtedly; Alfred is in the right.

Rosa. Well, be it so: but, if I again catch you, it shall be all fair. Remember, I have warned you.

Mar. O yes. [*He takes Alfred aside, and lets him see a little of the mask.*] What think you of it?

Alf. [*feigning to be frightened.*] O how horrible? I should certainly be terrified at seeing it myself. Well, hide it carefully; we'll play a little, and then slip away unperceived.

Mar. [*whispering Alf.*] Yes, we will; but I must, first of all, do something that may vex the ladies.

Alf. [*whispering to Martin.*] I'll go up to Rosamond and turn her round; if she catch me, she'll guess your name, and must blind again.

Mar. [*whispering to Alfred.*] Good! good! I'll have a little sport with her.

Beat. Well; when will you have told each other all your secrets? Two fine gentlemen! don't you see the game stands still?

Mar. You need not wait for us: we're ready.

Alf. [*keeping near Rosamond, as if he intended to pull her by the gown, and, seeing Martin go to bring a chair, says aside,*] Now, Rosamond, I'll put myself in your way.

[Martin brings a chair, and places it in such a manner that Rosamond will rumble over it; but Alfred removes the chair, and places himself in its stead, upon his hands and foet, with much shuffling, that Rosamond may hear him. She slides along, as if at hazard, encounters Alfred, stoops and seizes him.

Rosa. [*after having felt about his cape and wrists, and seeming doubtful.*] It is Alfred.

Alf. [*in appearance disconcerted.*] Yes, indeed; I'm taken. What ill luck to be caught so soon!

Rosa. [*pulling off the bandage.*] O ho! you

wanted to throw me down! I thought such tricks belonged only to Martin; but it shall not be long before I take revenge.

[She covers Alfred's eyes, so that he can slightly see persons; leads him toward the middle of the room; and then, as is the custom of the game, asks him,

How many horses has your father in his stable?

Alf. Three; black, white, and grey.

Rosa. Turn about three times, and catch whom you may.

[Alfred gropes about the room, and permits himself to be jostled from place to place. Rosamond particularly pesters him; he pretends to follow her, but suddenly turns round and catches Martin.

Alf. Ah, ha! I've got you! have I? It is a boy. It's Martin! [*Pulling off the handkerchief.*] Yes; I'm not mistaken.

Mar. [*whispering to Alfred.*] Why catch me?

Alf. [*whispering Martin.*] Don't mind it. You shall catch Danby. I'll push him towards you.

Mar. [*whispering Alfred.*] Do; and you shall see how I'll make him squeak. I'll pinch him till the very blood spins out.

[Alfred begins to cover Martin's eyes, and gives the company a nod, as he had previously planned. Danby, assisted by the ladies, takes away the lights, and all together go quietly into an adjoining closet.

Elder D. [*before he goes into the closet.*] Well; have you finish'd? Make haste. You take a deal of time. What mischief are you whispering to each other?

[At this instant the groom presents himself at the door, with a lighted torch in one hand, and a stick in the other, with a large full wig upon the top of it. He is covered from head to foot with Mr. Milner's gown, which trails along upon the floor behind him. Alfred beckons him to stop one moment at the entrance, while he is blinding Martin.]

Alf. [*putting Martin in the middle of the room.*] How many horses has your father in his stable?

Mar. Three; black, white, and grey.

Alf. Turn about—[*pretending to be angry with the company.*] Pray be quiet, young ladies, and

don't quit your places till the game's begun—Turn about three times, and catch whom you may.

[While Martin turns about, Alfred runs to get the speaking-trumpet, beckons the groom to advance and untie a huge cart-chain he has about his waist, which, falling, makes a hideous clanking, and then cries out lustily himself,—]

The ghost! the ghost! Run, Martin, for your life.

[Alfred slams and shuts the door violently; hides himself behind the ghost; and, speaking very loudly through the trumpet, says,—]

'Tis you, then, that come to steal my treasure!

Mar. [*shivering violently, and without courage to remove the bandage.*] Fire! fire! Danby! Where are you, Alfred? Murder! murder! Rosamond!

Alf. [*speaking through the trumpet.*] I've scared them away. Pull off your bandage, and look at me.

[Martin, without pulling off the bandage, puts both hands before his face, retiring as the ghost advances towards him.]

Alf. Pull it off, I say——

[Martin pulls down the bandage, which falls about his neck. At first he dares not lift his eyes: but at last, when he observes the ghost, he gives a shriek, and has not power to move.]

Alf. I know you well; your name is Martin.

[Martin, hearing these words, runs up and down, to escape: he finds the door fastened, falls upon his knees, holds out his hands in a supplicating attitude, and turns away his head.]

Alf. What, you think to escape, do you?

Mar. [*after several efforts.*] I have done nothing to you. You were never robbed by me.

Alf. Never robbed by you? You're capable of any villainy! Who is it squirts at people in the street? who fastens rabbits' tails behind their backs? Who fishes for their wigs? Who lames poor dogs and cats? Who sticks needles in chairs to wound his friends? And who has in his pocket even now a mask, with which to frighten two little children?

Mar. I have done all this! indeed I own it! but for heaven's sake pardon me, and I'll do so no more.

Alf. Who will answer for you?

Mar. Those you've scared away, if you'll call them.

Alf. Do you promise?

Mar. Yes; upon my honor.

Alf. Well, I take pity on you; but remember, were it my pleasure, I might easily fly away with you through the window.

[The phantom shakes his torch, which gives a glare like lightning, and then vanishes through the door. The frightened Martin falls on the floor, flat upon his face.]

SCENE THE LAST. *Martin, Alfred, the Groom, and Mr. Milner.*

Mr. M. [*entering with a lamp in his hand.*] What is all this disturbance?

Mar. [*without looking up.*] Is it I who make it? Pray, Mr. Ghost, don't come near me!

Mr. M. [*perceiving Martin on the floor.*] Who can this be?

Mar. You know me well enough, and have already taken pity on me.

Mr.M. I have already taken pity on you !

Mar. It was not I that robbed you.

Mr.M. Robbed me ! What does all this mean, master Martin ?

Mar. Yes ; that's my name, good ghost ; so pray don't hurt me.

Mr.M. I'm amazed ! Why are you in such a posture ? [*Puts down his lamp, holds out his hand, and lifts Martin from the floor.*]

Mar. [*struggling at first, but finally knowing Mr.M.*] Mr. Milner, is it you, sir ? [*His features brighten.*] He's gone, then, is he ? [*He looks round, sees the ghost, and turns away again.*] There he stands !—the phantom ! don't you see him ?

[Alfred leads the children from the closet. Laura and Danby are frightened at the phantom ; but the rest burst into a laugh.]

Mr.M. Well ! what does all this mean ?

Alf. [*coming forward.*] Let me explain the whole, father. This phantom is your groom ; and we have dressed him in your wig and gown.

Groom. [*letting his disguise fall.*] Yes, sir, it is I.

Mr.M. A wicked and sorry sort of sport this !

Alf. True, father ; but ask the company if master Martin has not well deserved to be thus frightened. He designed to terrify Laura and Danby : I only wished to hinder him. Let him only show the horrible mask he has in his pocket.

Mr.M. [*to Martin.*] Is this true ?

Mar. [*giving him the mask.*] I can't deny it : here it is, sir.

Mr. M. You have then richly deserved this treatment?

Rosa. It was we that persuaded Miss Viola to permit her brother to put in execution this device for the punishment of Martin.

Beat. You are still unacquainted, sir, with all the other wicked tricks he meant to play us!

Mr. M. [*to Martin.*] Is it thus, sir, you announce yourself, the first time you set foot within my doors? You have been disrespectful to me in the persons of my children, who were pleased to think you would become an agreeable guest. You have been disrespectful to these ladies, whom I need not say you should have honored and regarded. So begone! Your father, when he knows that you have been thus turned out of doors for your misconduct, will see how necessary it is to correct the vices of your heart. Whatever he may do, I will not permit you, by your vile and detestable example, to contaminate the virtuous disposition of those under my care. Go, and never let me see you here again! [*Martin is confounded, and withdraws.*] — And you, my young friends, altho' the circumstances of the case may, very possibly, excuse what you have done,—yet, for the future, never indulge yourselves in such cruel sport. The fears, with which children are affected, in such a tender age as yours, may possibly be followed by the worst of consequences during life,—insanity or idiotcy. Avenge yourselves upon the wicked by behaving better to them

than they have conducted themselves towards you, or by avoiding as far as possible all association with them ; and remember, from the wicked example Martin has afforded you, that, by plotting harm against others, you will often bring it upon your own heads.

THE CONJURING BIRD.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS

COUNTESS OF GLENALVON.	GABRIEL,	*Friends of Julia and Augustus.*
AUGUSTUS, *her Son.*	LUCIUS,	
JULIA, *her Daughter.*	SOPHIA,	
GEORGE ODDLY, *a Nobleman's Son.*	JENNY,	*Servants to the Countess.*
ELIZA, *his Sister.*	ROBERT,	

The SCENE *is at the country-house of the Countess, in two rooms that open into the garden.*

SCENE I.

Jenny, at a table, reckoning over a set of silver counters.

IT is all lost labor to stand counting in this manner. I can make no more than ninety-four; and yet there should be a hundred. I think there never was a house like this for hair-brained children; for, wherever they put their fingers, one may be sure they will jumble the whole house together, if they do not lose half the things. I must look for these counters in every nook and corner.

Enter the Countess.

Coun. You seem uneasy, Jenny. What is lost?

Jen. Your ladyship's best counters.

Coun. Do you not see them on the table?

Jen. Yes, madam; but the number is incomplete.

Coun. That should not be.

Jen. There are no less than six wanting. Were there not a hundred of them, my lady?

Coun. Yes; you know it as well as I.

Jen. There are now only ninety-four.

Coun. [*after counting them.*] There are indeed no more; and yet last night the number was complete. I put them away, when we stopt playing. What caused you now to come and count them?

Jen. Because, as I passed the door, I saw that the children had been playing with them.

Coun. Yet I had ordered absolutely that they should not be touched. The children have ivory ones; who could have given them these?

Jen. Themselves.

Coun. Where are they?

Jen. In the garden, with their little visitors.

Coun. Call Julia here.—But stay, have none been here but Julia and Augustus?

Jen. Yes, their friends; and who can tell——

Coun. What, Jenny! can you possibly suspect—

Jen. I will answer for your children, and the three young Davenports, please your ladyship, as if they were myself.

Coun. And not the others?

Jen. I do not know them well enough.

Coun. What, Jenny, two such children as the Hon. Mr. Oddly and his sister?

Jen. Here comes miss Julia.

Enter Julia.

Coun. Who told you, miss, to use my silver counters? Did I not forbid you to play with them?

Jul. It was not my fault, mother.

Coun. Whose then, pray?

Jul. George Oddly's and his sister's. I had the ivory counters, when they asked me if I meant to play with them, as they never had such at home, and must have better; and proceeded to open all the drawers and closets till they found them.

Coun. Why did you not mention that I would not let *you* use them?

Jul. They would not hear me. I believe they would have beat us, had we not surrendered them.

Jen. Upon my word! These children, as it seems, are charmingly brought up!

Coun. You should at least have counted them when you left off playing.

Jul. That was what I intended. But, when I had counted to twenty-four, George Oddly snatched them from me, put them up pell-mell, and dragged us into the garden with him.

Coun. Do you know that six are missing?

Jul. Surely not, mother!

Coun. How! surely! when I have told you! See now whether I can trust you! You know it was your duty to take care of them.

Jul. I was confounded, dear mother. These chil-

dren were so mischievous, I was compelled to have my eye continually upon them, as I thought they might break your china. I was obliged frequently to follow them about the room: they may have thrown the counters into some corner or other.

Coun. I must certainly have them found.

Jen. I know of but one way, madam. Were I you, I would turn the little masters' pockets inside out, before they left the house.

Coun. Fie, Jenny! would you have me affront their parents?

Jul. O, I am sure, mother, not one among them can have taken the counters.

Coun. So I think; but children of their age may be a little giddy-headed. Go to them, Julia, and ask politely if any one among them may not, by mistake, have put them in his pocket. Your commission is a nice one, and requires a little management. Take care not to offend them by insinuating that you think any one capable of taking them purposely.

Jul. I shall take care, mother.

Coun. Accuse yourself of negligence, and tell them that I shall blame you, if they are not found.

Jul. I understand.

Coun. And, as you pass, bid Robert come here.

Jul. I will, mother.

SCENE II. *Countess and Jenny.*

Jen. [*who had been employed in searching round the room.*] I will answer for it, they are not here; there is not a corner that I have not searched.

Coun. This ought not to happen in my house.

I dread the discovery, but must know by what means they have vanished.

Enter Robert.

Rob. What is your pleasure, my lady?

Coun. To inform you, Robert, that I have lost six silver counters.

Rob. Do you suspect me of taking them, madam?

Coun. No, Robert, I am well acquainted with your honesty. But I supposed you might have crossed the room, and seen them on some chair or elsewhere.

Rob. Counters on a chair?

Coun. I know, that is not a proper place for counters; but the children had been playing with them, and might inconsiderately have left them in some corner, where you might have seen them.

Rob. No, my lady, I have not.

Coun. I am sorry for it, and know not how to find them. They must have been lost since this morning, as I counted them myself last night. But you can look about the room.

Jen. Your ladyship has seen how I have been searching. Servants are badly off, when any thing is lost about a house. However honest they may be, they are constantly suspected.

Coun. Very likely; but the honest servant will on this occasion pardon me, if I include her in my search of the dishonest.

Rob. You may first examine me, my lady. Rogues are always the first to be displeased when they are suspected.

Jen. Thank heaven, I have no fear of that sort! but it cannot be a matter of indifference in the honest servant, when a thief is in the house.

Coun. Imagine yourself in my place; what would you do? Think, Robert.

Rob. Do, my lady? A thought this moment strikes me; and if I have leave to put it in execution, I engage to find the counters.

Cou. You must not give any one occasion to suppose himself suspected. What do you intend to do?

Rob. I cannot at present explain. A single syllable might spoil the scheme. I wish your ladyship to bring the children all together into the adjoining room. I promise you, the thief, if there is any thief among them, shall betray himself.

Coun. I am doubtful about giving permission——

Rob. You may trust me, madam. Be assured that no person except the guilty one shall have reason to complain; and him, to clear the innocent, I dare believe, you would not wish to spare.

Coun. Well, Robert, as I am confident of your prudence, I rely upon it in this urgency.

Rob. Good,my lady! I will now begin conjuring. It is quite simple, and you need not fear. [*Exit.*

Jen. My lady—did he not say something about conjuring? If I did not know myself innocent, I should be frightened out of my wits.

Coun. Don't be a simpleton, Jenny!

Enter Augustus.

Well, Augustus? You seem big with something! Have you brought the counters with you?

Aug. No, mother; I have just learnt that six are lost. My sister told us so this moment.

Coun. And how was the intelligence received?

Aug. We were exceedingly surprised. The two Davenports particularly, and their sister, want to come and plead their innocence before you.

Coun. Plead! they are the last that I should suspect of such a deed. And master Oddly——

Aug. He is furious; and told Julia, that, to look upon him as a thief, was a poor reception.

Coun. Julia was not rude, I hope, in delivering my message to the company?

Aug. No, mother; quite otherwise. She spoke with great politeness.

Coun. Then why was master Oddly angry? There was nothing disrespectful in my message.

Aug. I cannot tell the reason; Eliza drew him privately aside; but he would not condescend to hear her. He is determined to go home; his cap however is in this room, he will come for it, and declares that he will not remain a minute in the house. He threatens to complain to his father.

Coun. Positively he must not go. I will tell his lordship the whole affair myself when he comes to take his children home.

Aug. The rest wish for permission to appear and justify themselves.

Coun. There is no necessity. I only wished to know if they could give me any information of the counters. All these children are so well brought up, I could not venture to accuse them of a theft.

But I am well acquainted with the whims of youth They *will* see every thing, and finger every thing and, from mere thoughtlessness, might put a thing into their pocket, without any criminal intention.

Aug. Certainly they might, mother; as I did, you remember, when I took up my sister's purse through mistake, and was carrying it away.

Coun. But softly! here they are. Go, Jenny, and inquire how Robert progresses.

SCENE III. *Countess, Augustus, Julia, George Oddly, Eliza, Gabriel, Lucius, Sophia.*

Coun. Well, how fare you, my little friends? I am glad to see you here.

Geo. Miss Julia has just informed us, that your ladyship has lost six counters of the number with which, unluckily, we were playing. I am sorry for it; but could not have thought your ladyship would have suspected any one of us of having taken them. At least I can assure you, for my sister and myself, that we know nothing about them.

Coun. O, forbid that I should suspect such well-bred children as I look upon you to be. Did Julia tell you that I supposed you had the counters?

Eli. No, my lady; all she did was to inquire if we had not brought them out through inattention, or to play a little longer with them in the garden.

Coun. Which you might very innocently have done. It is Julia alone that I blame in the affair because she did not let you have *her* counters.

Gab. She intended, I believe, so to do.

Luc. I should never dare to show my face again, if I had taken the value of a pin.

Sophia. [*emptying her pockets.*] See, my lady, I have nothing here.

Coun. My dear children, I have already told you that I am far from suspecing any of you to have them, when you say you have not. They are certainly of no great value ; yet, as particular favorites, I confess their loss affects me.

Geo. Were they worth only a straw, they are your ladyship's, and ought not to be missing. But you know there are such things as servants ; and they are not always very honest. It is not the first time that we have suspected them at home.

Jul. But it is the first time any thing of the kind has happened in our house, dear Mr. Oddly.

Aug. I would answer for our servants, men and women.

Coun. I have trusted them a long time ; but if you, sir, [*to George,*] have made any observations, pray let me know them.

Geo. O no ! but, when we went into the garden, did not—what is her name—the housemaid, enter ?

Coun. Jenny ! O, I do not fear her. During the six years she has lived with me she might easily have taken many things of value had she been dishonest.

Geo. Did not your old footman come in ? I do not like his looks ; and should not choose to meet him in a lane at night.

Coun. Fie ! what makes you suspect honest

Robert? He was my father-in-law's confidential servant, and has been much longer in the family than even I myself. If *he* could possibly turn pilferer, neither you nor I could know whom we might trust.

Geo. It is not unlikely, then, that some one got into the room when we were gone.

Coun. That is not unlikely; I will go and inquire about it. Amuse yourselves till I come back.

Geor. No, madam; after what has passed, I cannot stay here any longer. Augustus, can you tell me where they have put my cap?

Aug. It is taken with the others to be brushed; it will be brought to you.

Geo. I must have it instantly.

Eli. Father intends coming in the carriage for us. Won't you stay a little till he comes?

Coun. I cannot possibly let you go home on foot. You would have upwards of three miles to walk. Stay here till I return; I will not detain you long. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Augustus, Julia, George Oddly, Eliza, Gabriel, Lucius, Sophia.*

Geo. I am much astonished that your mother has such thoughts of us! We steal her counters!

Jul. Sir, she entertains no such thoughts. She may have supposed that we might have put them, without thought, into our pockets. I might as unintentionally have taken them in this way, as yourself, or any other person; but to *steal!* she did not mention the word, nor one of like meaning.

Geo. Had there been none here but vulgar children, she might well have entertained suspicion; but she ought now to make some difference.

Gab. I perceive, you speak of us, sir; your looks inform me so. But allow me to inform you, in my turn, that it is a person's manners and principles, and not his birth, that makes him truly noble.

Geo. How these tradesmen talk about their manners! You are very happy that there are so few children hereabout, and that Augustus and myself are forced to make you our companions, or have no diversion. If you lived in London, you would have no such honor, notwithstanding your fine manners.

Aug. Speak for yourself, sir; in London too, just as here, I should be proud to entertain my little friends.

Jul. Yes, certainly. They give us as good examples as such whipper-snapper noblemen as you.

Eli. You have deserved this, brother. You first descended to personality.

Geo. And you too against me? You think as I do, but you will not confess it. Don't you remember what mother said on the subject of familiarity with those beneath us? 'Never mix with vulgar children: in the lower ranks of life you will always have low thoughts.'

Aug. And can you suspect that my friends are capable of being thieves?

Gab. Did we approach the table?

So. No; I saw George take the counters, and look at them, I suppose half a dozen times.

[George attempts to strike her. Augustus and Gabriel hold his hands.

Aug. Softly! You will have to deal with me else

Gab. No, no, my friend. I thank you, but I can take care of my sister. Let him even threaten her. I am no more frightened at his size than his title.

Geo. It is far beneath me to dispute with traders.

Jul. I hope then it is far beneath you likewise to strike a little girl.

Geo. I shall not permit her to insult me.

Eli. She would certainly done much better, had she been silent.

Jul. But, being a child, she might be pardoned; and particularly when she spoke the truth.

Gab. My sister said that you took the counters and looked at them; that was all. And this certainly is true. Did she say any thing more?

Geo. I shall not even condescend to answer.

Gab. You cannot adopt a better resolution, whilst you have no better answers to make.

Enter Countess.

Coun. What is the cause of all this? I will have no quarrels here!

Geo. My lady, I expect you will do me justice on these little folks!

Coun. Folks! folks! who are they? I am not accustomed to call visitors here by such names.

Aug. George is angry, mother, because we were not in a humor to endure his airs.

Jul. He thought he should have had a company of dukes at least for playfellows.

Gab. And imagines that we ought to be suspected of theft, rather than a nobleman.

Luc. As if we had not characters to support, as well as himself!

So. Ay, and would have beaten me, if Gabriel had not taught him better.

Coun. Why, surely! it is not possible!

Eli. To say the truth, my brother is too hasty.

Coun. Vivacity becomes his age very well; but no one should be proud, quarrelsome, or rash. Here is Robert.

Enter Robert, with a basket, covered with a napkin.

Rob. There is no more to be said, my lady. Every body in the house is innocent, and I am glad to hear it; but, for the satisfaction of the company, I will introduce my rooster, who, you must know, is a conjurer. [*Placing the basket on the table.*]

So. [*jumping for joy.*] O, a cock! a cock!

Rob. Yes, nothing more; for, look here! [*He lifts up a napkin in the basket, so that Sophia and the rest discern the bird's head, neck, and crest.*] Just like others, except that my bird has not his equal in the world for knowledge: why, he will tell me things which no person can possibly know. If a single straw, and nothing else, is missing, I need only run and have a consultation with him: he will be sure to know who stole it.

Jul. You can then find our counters, can you?

Rob. Can I? Why, miss, at the alehouse, last Christmas, I lost my snuff-box; so what did I but

go and fetch my pretty bird, who let me know that the groom had it: and I think you recollect, he broke his leg about a fortnight afterward.

So. He can talk then?

Rob. Yes, like other cocks: '*Cock-a-ra-aw-aw.*' Upon which, I understand him just as if it were you that spoke to me.

Jul. You never told us all this before.

Rob. Because you never lost any thing before.

Cou. Well, a truce to this conversation, and begin.

Rob. Not quite so fast, my lady. I must perform my conjuring in the dark.

Coun. A very easy matter. You need only close the outside shutters. [*Exit Robert.*

SCENE V. *Countess, Augustus, Julia, George Oddly, Eliza, Gabriel, Lucius, Sophia.*

[The children lift up a corner of the napkin, excepting George, who appears embarrassed.]

Aug. [*looking earnestly at the bird.*] This cock seems supernatural, I fancy. How his eyes shine!

Jul. And his comb, how red it looks! my patience, how it shakes upon his head!

So. Do you imgaine that it has as much knowledge as Robert says?

Luc. Father has often told us what we ought to think of such strange stories.

Gab. Robert is a cunning sportsman; and I am sure can make birds hold their tongues much better with his fowling-piece, than teach a cock to talk by virtue of his wand.

Eli. Who knows! my governess has told me many wondrous things of conjuration, and all that.

Geo. I wonder, sister, you can listen to such stories!

Coun. I am glad you have these notions of the matter, and should like to laugh at Robert for his folly. What simplicity! a cock discover thieves!

Geo. [*forcing a smile.*] I fancy we shall have a deal of laughing very shortly. [*The shutters are suddenly closed.*] But why close the shutters? [*with uneasiness.*] I do not like darkness.

Jul. If the cock cannot see, he will never find out the thief. Will he, mother?

Coun. Well asked ; for I cannot tell you.

So. If I knew how, I should like to make him speak. Come, pretty little cock, say something.—See how dark it is.—Look out a little.—He does not speak a word !

Jul. The reason is, I suppose, he will obey his master only.

Enter Robert.

Coun. Well, Robert, as you have shut out the day-light, I suppose you are now satisfied ?

Rob. Yes, my lady, every thing is as it should be. And so now, let those remain that have not stolen the counters ; but, if any one is guilty, let that one go out. — What, all remain !

Geo. How cunning !

Rob. I see clearly then that I must employ my art. [*He waves his wand, and draws a circle on the floor; pronouncing some unintelligible words.*]

That's well ! So now, my pretty cock, take heed ;
And tell us who are rogues indeed.

Come now, my little ladies and gentlemen, every one of you, in turn, lift up the napkin here, and, with your right hand, do you see, draw it gently across the back of Chanticleer. You will hear his music, when the thief once puts his hand upon him : but do not lift the cloth too high ; only just high enough to let your hand pass under it.

So now, my pretty cock, take heed ;
And tell us who are rogues indeed.

Well ! will none of you begin ?

Coun. What, every one afraid ? Why, one would think you all guilty, at this rate !

So. I am the youngest, but I will set a good example. [*She lifts up the cloth, and passes her hand twice down the bird's back.*] Do you see, the cock does not speak. It is not I that took the counters.

Rob. Very well. Now stand in this place, with your hand behind you. Is it so?

So. Feel, feel.

Rob. That is right. Now you, sir. [*To Aug.*]

Aug. O, I fear as little as Sophia—There—he has not spoke. Must I too hold my hand behind me?

Rob. Certainly; and every one. Come here by this young lady. Well, another.

Jul. I will go next. [*She strokes him.*] If he had said a word, he would have been a story-teller.

Rob. Stand here by your brother. Who's next?

Eli. It is my turn now. [*She strokes him.*] Mute as a mackerel. Yet I stroked him four times over.

Rob. Are your right hands all behind you? Do not forget that part.

Gab. [*to George,*] I will follow you.

Geo. As if I'd have to do with such child's play!

Coun. You would not surely spoil our sport? A little complaisance, pray, Mr. Oddly.

Geo. If that is all, I have no objection. [*He puts his hand under the cloth.*] There—he has not spoke to me, altho' I have stroked him more than others.

Rob. Well, sir, stand here, with the rest; and keep your hand behind you.

So. There are none left but my brothers, who have not tried. It is one of them! No; I cannot think

so. [*Gabriel and Lucius imitate the others; and the children burst into a loud laugh.*]

Luc. And where is the thief? Why, no where

Coun. Robert, you should send your cock to Norwood; he is not cunning enough; and all this while he has not found my counters.

Rob. This confounds me, I acknowledge. For a little while, however, patience; do not stir. Stand still, I say. They are just like so much quicksilver! My circle, I think, must have been imperfect. I will bring a light, and examine. I pray your ladyship, let no one quit his place. [*Exit.*

Geo. I knew beforehand how all this would end Stupid nonsense!

So. Why, this cock is no wiser than his master.

Eli. Truly, I am glad to see him caught.

Jul. What does Robert design to do, mother, when he has brought the light?

Coun. He will show us.

So. I should like to see the learned cock now. He will scarcely hold up his head, I suppose, for shame.

Enter Robert, with a lamp.

Rob. [*going to Sophia.*] Come, miss, let me see your little hand. [*She holds out the left.*] Not this, but that behind you. Good!

So. [*looking at her hand, and crying out*] O, what a hand I have! as black as any coal! And will it be always so?

Rob. Do not be frightened, little miss! I will speak about it to my cock, and you shall have both hands as white as snow.

[The children have not patience to wait, but all look together at their right hands, and instantly cry out.]

Aug. How black my fingers are too !

Jul. And mine likewise ! What does Robert mean by this ?

Eli. I would twist the creature's neck, if I had him.

Gab. My wristbands have come in for a little of it !

Luc. My hand looks as if it were painted !

Geo. [*lifting his hands in triumph.*] But see mine ! There is none of the company that has a hand fit to look at, except me.

Rob. [*taking hold of George by the arm.*] Then, sir, you have stolen the counters. Give them up, young gentleman, this instant ; or I will search your pockets, and then blacken you all over !

Eli. Blacken him ! O, brother ! if you have the counters, give them up this moment.

Coun. Take care, Robert, what you say !

Rob. I am sure he has them. So deliver the counters this moment, or expect to have a countenance as grimy as the blackest negro's.

Geo. [*turning pale, and trembling.*] Is it possible that I should have put them in my pocket, and not thought what I was about. [*He feels about himself.*] I recollect I had them in my hand. [*He seems surprised at finding them thrust into a corner of his vest pocket.*] Dear me ! they are here indeed ! Who would have thought it ? [*All the children look at each other with surprise, while George stands confounded.*]

Coun. Robert, take away your cock and candle,

and open the shutters. Take care [*in a whisper*] not to tell how you found the counters.

Rob. I will, my lady. [*Exit.*

Coun. Go, my little friends, into the next room. You will find soap and water there to wash your hands. Take care, and do not wet your clothes.

Geo. No; but if this black should not come off?

Coun. It is nothing but a little ivory black, and water will remove it. You, sir, [*to Geo.*] as your hands are clean, may stay with me. [*Ex. children.*

Coun. Well then, my haughty little gentleman! is it possible you could be guilty of so infamous an action? You that, scarcely a quarter of an hour ago, looked down with scorn upon the children of a reputable, worthy tradesman, and supposed your quality disgraced by being found in their company! They have at present their revenge, since they may call you, and with justice, a thief!

Geo. Pray pardon me, my lady!—I was playing with the counters—and, without considering at the moment, must have put them into my pocket. I have no other method of accounting for their being found in my possession.

Coun. Pitiful, vile excuse! that aggravates your fault! At such a tender age as yours, I could not have imagined any one possessed such effrontery.

Geo. Believe me, madam, I had no bad design! I took them without meaning so to do, and afterwards concealed the matter, from my dread of being taken for a thief.

Coun. But, after I had bid my daughter make

inquiry for them with such delicacy, you might easily have seemed to search your pockets, and restored them without blushing. Your proceeding would then have been looked upon as nothing but inadvertency.

Geo. I did not think of that, my lady.

Coun. What then did you think, when you durst drop hints that possibly my honest servants might have taken them? or that my children's little friends were objects of suspicion? What were your ideas when you made believe to stroke the cock?

Geo. But, madam, I *did* stroke him.

Coun. Silence, you wicked wretch!—for that name is not too bad for your deservings. Happily, as yet, you have not sufficient cunning to conceal your wicked actions. *You did stroke the cock!* Is that your assertion? Do you not see that, if you had, you would have blacked your hands as well as all the others, Robert having smeared the bird with a black composition! Your companions were not in the least afraid to stroke him, as their consciences did not reproach them for the theft; but as for you, the apprehension lest the servant's artifice might really be conjuration, awed you; and the means that you chose, to avoid detection, have betrayed you. O, how politic you thought yourself in only pretending, as you did, to stroke the cock! but you would have found honesty much better policy. You deserve that I should tell your father of your behavior, when he comes for you.

Geo. (*falling on his knees.*) O, no! pray, my

lady, I beseech you! He would beat me—he would tread me under foot!

Coun. And it would be better that he should do so, than bring up a monster to disgrace him at some future period. If, in the season of infancy, as I may call it, you can commit so great a crime, of what horrid depravity may you not finally be guilty?

Geo. Ah, madam, pardon me for pity's sake, and never——

Coun. Doubtless you have often made these promises to others; for this is hardly your first transgression. Every circumstance confirms it. So much falsity and impudence——

Geo. Then hear me, my good lady! if you ever learn in future that I make free with any thing whatever that is not mine——

Coun. Inform me, in the first place, what you intended to do with six counters? You could not suppose you would have an opportunity of using them, they would have been instantly known. You meant to sell them for money?

Geo. No, madam, believe me! I was pleased with looking at them. I supposed that no one would remember having seen them elsewhere, and on that account I secreted them.

Cou. And how could you desire to have another's property? Is this your first offence? Confess!

Geo. [*hiding his face.*] O no, indeed, my lady. I have often been a thief at home; but, having never been suspected there, I hoped to have the same good fortune here.

Coun. A very wicked mode of reasoning! For, granting that no one on earth suspected you, do you not know that God sees and punishes whatever is done amiss? Perhaps however this event is for your benefit; and you will be more likely to amend, when you have been once punished as you merit.

Geo. Let it be by you, my lady, or by any one, rather than by my father. Let him know nothing of the matter, I conjure you. Tell it, if you please, to my mother, but keep the matter from his knowledge.

Coun. There again! You would not have your father know it, because you fear the punishment he might bestow upon you. Thus, it is an abject spirit that guides you, even in the work of repentance! Nor is it for his peace of mind that you would conceal it from him; for you are not afraid your mother should know it, because she would not punish you. It is not therefore your wish to regard *her* peace of mind.

Geo. Then tell it to my preceptor.

Coun. I am sensible how much the knowledge of your fault would afflict your parents; and from that consideration only, and not on your own account, consent to spare you: On this condition, however, that you return hither with your preceptor, and, in his presence, give me your solemn promise of amendment. I shall request him to keep watch upon your conduct. If you break your word, I will not only mention this adventure of the counters to your father, but every one else may know it.

Geo. I consent, my lady.

Coun. You may perhaps think, that, after this, I shall forbid your visiting Julia and Augustus; but I have at heart your reformation, and will judge of your future conduct myself. You may therefore continue coming here.

Geo. But how shall I dare to face your servants?

Coun. You have nothing to fear on that account, for I have had more care and forethought for your reputation than yourself, by desiring Robert not to mention it in the kitchen or elsewhere.

Geo. Ah, my lady, how much am I indebted to you for your lenity; I shall never forget the service you have done me. But your children? and the little company with them?

Coun. I am well acquainted with their goodness, and am sure they will forgive you. Call them.

[George with a downcast look goes slowly toward the door and bids them enter.

Enter Augustus, Julia, Eliza, Gabriel, Lucius, Sophia.

Eli. Go, sir, you are a disgrace to our family; I will never call you brother again.

Coun. No, my dear Eliza, he is not so guilty as you think him. He has told me every thing. It was to play a little with the counters out of doors that he first took them; but, when it was considered as a theft, he was terrified at the idea of incurring my suspicion. This apparent guilt has sprung from a mistaken shame, which I am willing to excuse; but [*to the little Davenports*] his scan

dalous endeavor to make you, my little dears, seem guilty, is inexcusable.

Gab. O, my lady, we do not wish him any harm at present for it ; we know that we should forgive even such as wrong us, and particularly when we see they are unhappy.

Coun. Do you mark that, sir ? Such conduct ought to convince you how much nobler it is to possess elevated thoughts than to boast of pedigree or what you consider an elevated birth. You find you are entirely at the mercy even of those whom you have insulted ; and, with all the boast of your nobility, you are an object of their pity.

Geo. O, what shame ! but I submit to undergo it.

Gab. We will never again mention this matter. It shall be a secret between us for the time to come or be forgotten ; shall it not, brother ?

Luc. Yes, he may rely on my silence.

Gab. And you, sister ?

So. I will not have him flogged. I know what pain it gives one. [*George, in a transport of gratitude, embraces them.*]

Geo. I desire, but dare not ask, to be acquainted with you for the future.

Gab. It will be doing us an honor, if you will still continue upon terms of friendship with us.

Aug. and Jul. And, for our part, we shall be no less delighted with your company, as long as you regard our friends.

Eli. You are all too good. George does not

merit such indulgence, and father must be informed of every thing.

Coun. You will lose my friendship and esteem entirely, could you possibly remain unaffected by your brother's laudable repentance, when even strangers forgive his errors. Do not employ the advantage that his offence affords you, to undo him in his parents' good opinion; but, for the future, let your good counsel show him how to act, that he may merit their affection. I dare answer, you need not hereafter be ashamed of any action of your brother.

Geo. I should be unworthy of such kindness and goodness, if this lesson could be blotted from my remembrance.

Soph. Take care it be not, or *Beware of the Conjuring Bird.*

THE LITTLE FIDDLER.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS

MR. MELFORT.
CHARLES, *his Son.*
SOPHIA, *his Daughter.*
GODFREY, *his Nephew.*
AMELIA RICHMOND,
CHARLOTTE RICHMOND, *Friends of Sophia.*
JONAS, *the little Fiddler.*

SCENE, *Mr. Melfort's House in the Country.*

SCENE I.

Charles and Godfrey. Charles speaks.

HARK ye, cousin. You must do me a favor.

Godf. Well, let's know what it is? You have always something or other to ask of me.

Cha. That's because you are the cleverer of the two. You know the translation of that fable of Phædrus, that our tutor has given me for a task.

Godf. What, have you not finished it yet?

Cha. How do you think I should have finished it, when I have not begun it?

Godf. You had not time then to do it from twelve o'clock till four!

Cha. You shall hear now whether that was possible. At eleven o'clock I could not help taking a turn or two in the garden to get an appetite for dinner. We were at table an hour. Then to sit down and study immediately after one's meals, you know how dangerous the doctor says that is. Of course, as I had made a hearty dinner, I had occasion for a good deal of exercise to digest it, you know.

Godf. Well, you have now had exercise enough; and, in order to finish your task before dark, there is plenty of time.

Cha. You do not consider that now I must go to my writing.

Godf. But, as your writing-master hasn't come—

Cha. I shall wait for him. It would be spoiling every thing, to confound my hours of business.

Godf. Well, after your writing, you have still some of the afternoon, and the whole of the evening.

Cha. I shall not have a minute. My sister expects the two Misses Richmond to see her.

Godf. It is not on your account they come.

Cha. No. But then I *must* help my sister to entertain them.

Godf. What will hinder you when the young ladies go away?——

Cha. O yes, indeed! to work by candle-light, and spoil my eyes! Yet my translation must be ready by to-morrow morning.

Godf. Whether it be, or not, what is that to me?

Cha. And would you then see me reprimanded by my tutor and my father?

Godf. You always know how to get the better of me. Come, let me see, where is this task ?

Cha. Above stairs in my room, on the table. I will go for it ; or rather come along with me.

Godf. Do you go first. I shall follow immediately. I see your sister coming this way. She wanted to speak with me.

Cha. But don't tell her any thing of this ; you understand me ?

Enter Sophia.

Soph. Well, cousin, what have you and my brother been conversing about ? He has been playing you one of his old tricks.

Godf. No ; he has only been making me one of his old requests. He wants me, as usual, to perform his task for him against to-morrow.

Soph. Is father never to be told of his idleness ?

Godf. I shall not undertake that office. You know that, ever since your mother's death, my uncle's health has been precarious, and the least emotion occasions illness for days together. You know his generosity supports me ; and he might think I wished to lessen your brother in his esteem.

Soph. Well, I shall talk to my brother the first opportunity. But do you know what I had to say to you ? The Misses Richmond are coming to see me to-day, and you must assist in our amusements.

Godf. O, I shall certainly do my best, cousin.

Soph. Ah, here they are !

Enter Amelia and Charlotte Richmond.

Soph. How do you do, my dear friends ?

[They salute each other, and curtsey to Godfrey, who bows to them.

Char. It seems an age since I saw you last.

Amel. Indeed it is a long time.

Soph. I believe it is more than three weeks.

[Godfrey draws out the table, and gives them chairs.

Char. Don't trouble yourself, master Godfrey.

Godf. I only do my duty, Miss.

Soph. Godfrey does it with pleasure. [*gives him her hand.*] I wish my brother had a little of his complaisance.

Enter Charles.

Cha. [*without taking notice of the company.*] This is very pretty of you, Godfrey, to let me wait so long, while you are playing the fine gentleman.

Godf. I thought myself the *last* person in the company to whom you would direct your compliments.

Cha. O do not be angry, ladies; I shall be at your service presently.

Amel. Pray don't hurry yourself, Mr. Charles.

[Charles takes Godfrey aside, and, while the ladies converse together, draws a paper from his pocket.]

Cha. There it is; you understand me.

Godf. Six lines! a mighty task indeed! are you not ashamed?

Cha. Hist! hold your tongue.

Godf. Ladies, with your leave, I will step out for a few minutes.

Char. We shall impatiently expect your return.

Soph. As you are going out, cousin, pray bid Jenny bring in tea. [*Exit Godf.*

Cha. [*throwing himself into an arm-chair.*] Soh! I shall take possession of this.

So. I think it would have been civil to ask leave.

Cha. Your leave, perhaps?

Soph. I am not the only person here.

Char. Your brother counts us as nothing, I see.

Amel. He thinks certainly that he does us a great deal of honor in keeping us company.

Cha. I know you could do without my company; but I could not so easily deprive myself of yours.

Soph. That has at least the *appearance* of a compliment; although, I believe, to say the truth, the tea should come in for the greatest part of it.

Cha. You are very right, my dear sister, in thinking I do not stay on your account.

Soph. As to that, I have too humble an opinion of my own merit. All, in which I *should* take pride, is, my being sister to so polite a young gentleman.

[Jenny brings the tea and sets it before Sophia.

Cha. Let me pour it out; pray do.

Soph. No, that is my business; you are a little too awkward. If you want to do something, hand these cups to the ladies.

Amel. Not so much sugar for me.

Soph. Help yourself, my dear, to your liking.

[Hands her a cup and the sugar basin. Charles takes a cup for himself, and seizes the sugar-dish.]

Charles, you have three great lumps already.

Cha. That is not too much. I like it pretty sweet.

[Takes several bits, one after another, till his sister takes the basin out of his hand.]

Soph. Are you not ashamed, brother? You see there will be none left for us.

Cha. Well, don't you know the way to the sugar-canister?

Soph. My brother would think he had done wrong, if he saved his sister any trouble.

Cha. No; but, if you went for it, I should have the pleasure of being alone with these ladies.

Amel. Do you hear that, Sophia? Now will you say that your brother is not perfectly polite?

Soph. [*having collected the cups, and filled them again.*] Charles, hand Amelia this cup.

[Charles takes the cup, and, in handing it to Amelia, spills the tea upon her dress. They hastily rise.

Soph. There's a specimen of his politeness.—[*Aside to Charles.*] I dare say, that was done on purpose, you ill-natured creature.

Amel. O dear! what will mother say, and what shall we do?

Char. This is only the second time she has worn this dress. Make haste, a glass of clean water.

Soph. No; I have heard it is better to rub it with a dry linen cloth. Here is a handkerchief quite clean.

[The ladies assist Amelia, Charlotte holding her dress, whilst Sophia rubs it. Meantime Charles remains at table, quite unconcerned, sipping his tea.]

Char. It begins to disappear; you must let it dry.

Amel. By good luck it is a fold, where one will not think of looking.

Cha. [*aside.*] That's not my fault.

Soph. There, look now, Charlotte, I don't think it will be observed.

Char. If I had not seen the spot before——

Amel. Very true. However, Mr. Charles, another time I shall beg you to spare yourself the trouble of waiting upon me.

Soph. Come, ladies, let us take our places again. [*Going to pour out the tea, she finds the teapot empty.*] Well, this is a piece of ill manners that I could not have imagined. Would you believe it, ladies? while we were so much concerned, he has helped himself, and drank all the tea. However, I will soon order more.

Char. No, there has been quite enough; I do not wish for another drop.

Amel. The misfortune to my dress has quenched my thirst.

Cha. I beg you will make no ceremony. They can soon bring us more.

Amel. I think you should have known beforehand that your brother was to be one of the company.

Soph. Those who are not invited should at least wait their turn.

Char. Let us say no more about it. It gives me not the least concern.

Soph. Well, what shall we do now? Ah, here is our friend Godfrey. He will help us to fix on some amusement.

Cha. [*mimicking her.*] Our friend Godfrey! But, ladies, I must speak to him before you.

Enter Godfrey.

Cha. [*aside.*] Well, have you done it?

Godf. There it is, take it, and blush for your idleness.—Well, ladies, have you fixed upon any amusement?

Amel. No; we waited your determination.

Godf. I have a little musician below stairs at your service. If you give me leave, I will call him up to sing you a song, or to play, if you choose, for a dance.

Soph. A little musician! where is he?

Char. We must acknowledge that master Godfrey knows how to amuse company.

Godf. At the same time that we amuse ourselves, we shall do an act of charity; for the poor little fellow has no livelihood but his violin.

Cha. And who will pay him?—master Godfrey? He talks and acts as if the king were his cousin; yet he has not a farthing all the while.

Soph. Are you not ashamed, brother?

Godf. Let him go on, cousin, he does not offend me. It is no crime to be poor. I am like this little musician; who is, for all that, a very good boy. I will give him this sixpence I have remaining; and he has promised to play for this the whole evening.

Char. We will make a collection to pay him.

Amel. Yes; we shall club.

Godf. Shall I go for him? he waits at the door.

Soph. By all means cousin, and make haste.

[Godfrey goes out, in the meantime Jenny brings in cake on a plate.

Cha. [*going to take the plate from Jenny, Sophia prevents him.*] I was only going to cut it up.

Soph. I will save you the trouble; you would cut it up so well, I suppose, that we should have no more of the cake than we had of the tea. [*She divides it, and hands it round.*]

Cha. [*after taking his share.*] Who is to have the piece that is left?

Soph. What! is my cousin to have none?

Amel. I would rather give him my part.

Char. And I mine.

Cha. [*with a sneer.*] He is exceedingly happy.

Soph. Do you envy him for his cake only?

Enter Godfrey, leading Jonas by the hand, who has his violin under his arm.

Godf. Give me leave to present my young performer.

Char. and Amel. He is a smart little fellow.

Soph. Where do you come from, my man?

Jon. I come from the wolds of Yorkshire, ma'am.

Amel. What has made you come so far?

Jonas. Because my poor father is blind and cannot work. So I lead him through the country, and support him with my fiddle.

Soph. Will you give us a specimen of your skill?

Jonas. That I will, with all my heart; but my performance is not very good.

Godf. Play your best; at any rate it will be well enough for me, and these ladies will be so good as to pardon you, if you should play a little out of tune.

[Jonas tunes his violin. Amelia in the mean time taking the plate, presents the remainder of the cake to Godfrey. He bows, and holds the plate in his hand without touching the cake, while he listens to Jonas. The latter begins by playing the air of the following song; and then accompanies it with the words:]

I.

Pity the hardships of a boy,
Whose tender hands maintain a helpless sire;
Alas! no other means can he employ,
But that compassion which their wants inspire.

II.

Pity their lot who would not importune,
Chill penury implores a scanty boon;
Long years of toil have dimm'd the father's eyes,
The other's weakness that resource denies.

III.

O let their hardships touch the bounteous breast,
Relieve the aged sire and helpless boy;
A little bread were wealth to the distrest,
Alas! 'tis all their pressing wants enjoy.

Godf. [*giving him his hand.*] Poor child! then you are both in great distress!

Jonas. Alas! we are; but, with the help of my fiddle, I hope we shall never be destitute. If we should be sick, God will take care of us; and if we die, we shall want nothing but a little spot of earth, which may be had any where.

Godf. But, my poor little boy, perhaps you are hungry. Here, take my cake.

Jonas. O no, my pretty master, eat it yourself; a bit of bread serves me.

Godf. No, you shall have this; I can eat bread as well as you.

Jonas. Well, sir, I thank you; but I will not eat

it now. I will share it with my father; he is not used to such good things.

Soph. Your father, say you? here; give *him* my part.

Char. And take mine too.

Amel. And mine.

Jonas. O no; keep your cakes, young ladies. One piece is enough for me. We are not used to eating sweet things.

Cha. [*ironically.*] He is right; that would spoil his fine sweet voice.

Soph. Nobody has asked you for yours.

Cha. O, I have despatched mine long ago.

Godf. Come, my man; will you taste your cake?

Jonas. No master; since you are so good as to give it me, allow me to wrap it up and take it home.

Soph. Stop, I will give you a cloth; and meantime you may lay your cake in the window.

Jonas. I will, my good young lady. I came here to play upon the fiddle, not to eat.

Amel I wish to dance a minuet with master Godfrey. Can you play one?

Jonas. Whatever you please. A minuet, a cotillion, or a contra dance.

Amel. Let us have the minuet first. [*Godfrey takes Amelia by the hand to dance.*]

Char. [*stepping towards Charles.*] Why cannot we also dance, Mr. Charles?

Cha. Excuse me, miss, I can't dance.

Soph. Yet he has been full two years in learning

Cha. I am not in a capering humor to-day.

Char. [*curtseying to him.*] So then, I'm refused.

Soph. Lend me your hat, Godfrey. I will have the honor, ma'am, [*to Charlotte*] to be your squire

Amel. Then we'll dance a double minuet?——

Godf. Miss, I am at your service.

[They dance a double minuet, after which Charlotte goes to take out Godfrey.

Char. Mr. Godfrey, now I will dance with you.

Godf. I shall be happy, miss, to have that honor.

Amel. And now, Sophia, I will be your squire.

Soph. As this goes, I find I must lose my cousin; however, these ladies have the first claim to your complaisance.

[They dance another minuet; during which Charles goes to the window, takes Jonas's cake, and goes out.

Soph. [*to Godfrey, who wipes his face.*] Ah! you give it up: you must acknowledge that we have stronger feet than you gentlemen.

Godf. It is because you are much nimbler.

Amel. [*to Godf.*] If your cousin had been as polite as you, we should soon have overmatched you; for then one of us could take breath, while the other two danced. [*They look round for Charles.*]

Char. He is gone; so much the better.

Jonas. Shall I play another tune or two?

Godf. No; that is enough; unless, ladies, you would choose more. The little fellow will be glad to go and earn something elsewhere. I have already told you how little I have in my purse; and Charles has gone off without paying.

Char. We will contribute as well as you.

Amel. Certainly, we so intended. [*Takes out her purse.*] There, master Godfrey, is my purse.

Char. And here is mine.

Soph. Hold, cousin, here is a shilling: keep your money, and this will do for us both.

Godf. No, Sophia, I have a right to pay first.

[They collect the money, and give it to Jonas.

Jonas. I will never take all that; this young gentleman promised me only sixpence.

Godf. Take the whole, my man; we are very happy to be able to do you service.

Jonas. God reward you. Now, miss, if you will please to give me a piece of old linen or paper to wrap round the cake?

Soph. I had quite forgot it. [*Runs to the drawer and gets a clean handkerchief.*] There; it is a little worn, but it will do very well for this purpose.

Jon. May heaven repay you for your generosity. [*Goes to the window for the cake.*] It is not here.

Soph. What a sad boy is that Charles! he certainly has taken this poor child's cake.

Jon. Do not be concerned, my sweet young lady. I am only sorry on account of my poor father.

Godf. If Charles were not your brother, his greediness should cost him dear; but Jonas' father must not be a loser. My dear Sophia, lend me that sixpence you were going to pay for me just now.

Soph. No, cousin, I will have the merit of it myself. There, my lad, is sixpence; buy another cake for your father.

[Charlotte and Amelia feel in their purses.

Char. Hold, here are some more pence.

Amel. Take this too.

Jonas. O dear! no; this is too much.

Godf. [*taking him by the hand affectionately.*] How unhappy I am not to have any thing more to give you! But I am an orphan, and subsist, like yourself, upon the generosity of others.

Jonas. [*to Godf.*] I wish that you had not brought me here, or that you would take back your money.

Godf. Do not be uneasy as to me. Farewell. Go and try to earn something elsewhere.

Jonas. [*to Sophia, as he is going.*] But take your handkerchief, my good young lady.

Soph. No, keep it, if it be of any use to you.

Jonas. May heaven preserve you all, and make you still more amiable than you are. [*Exit.*

Soph. Can you imagine any thing more shameful than the behavior of Charles?

Amel. He should not play these pranks if I were his sister.

Char. I am sorry he has destroyed all the pleasure we had in doing service to this poor little boy.

Amel. However, he is not badly off; the cake has been pretty well made up to him.

Godf. Very true, thanks to your kindness. But that does not justify the behavior of Charles. Poor Jonas might have had one without losing the other.

Soph. It is you, cousin, who have suffered most. You have deprived yourself of your share, that my good-for-nothing brother might eat it.

[A knocking is heard at the door

Enter Jonas.

Godf. Here is our little fiddler again. What is the matter, my man ?

Jonas. [*crying.*] O dear ! O dear ! I am ruined.

[The children gather round.

Soph. What has happened to you ?

Jonas. The whole of my poor subsistence—all that I had to maintain myself and my father—see, see here—my little violin—it is broken all to pieces, and your handkerchief and your money—all is gone—he has taken it all from me.

Godf. Who has broken your violin ? Who has taken your money ?

Jonas. 'Twas he—'Twas he who took my cake.

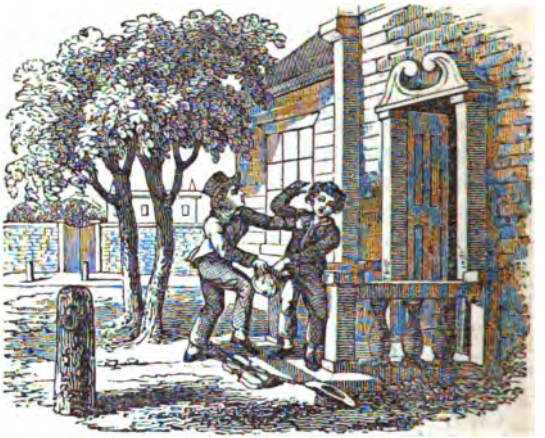
Soph. What, my brother ?

Godf. Charles ?

Char. It cannot be !

Amel. O the wretch !

Jonas. Yes, it was he. As I was going out at the street door, he met me, and asked if I had been paid for my playing, as otherwise he meant to pay me. 'O yes, that I have,' said I, 'and overpaid.' 'How came they by so much money ?' says he. 'Let me see what they have given you.' So I, silly fool that I was—I should have remembered the cake ; but I thought no more of that, I was so overjoyed to carry home so much money to my father. Besides, as I had not counted it, I was desirous to know the amount. So I laid my fiddle down on the ground, and took out the handker-



chief. 'See here,' said I to him, 'what I have got more than was at first promised me; one of the young misses gave it to me.' I had tied up all my money in the handkerchief, and was going to undo the knot, when he snatched at it. I now guessed his roguery. He pulled it one way and I another, when all at once, seeing my fiddle on the ground, he jumped upon it with both his feet. To save my fiddle, I loosed my hold of the handkerchief; so he got it from me and ran away. Both my fiddle and the bow are broken, and now I have nei-

ther handkerchief nor money. O my father! my poor father! What will become of us?

Soph. Why really I don't know. I have nothing more in the world. O, cousin!

Char. Here are a few pence, all that I have.

Jonas. My sweet miss, I thank you; but that will not buy me a fiddle. O my poor father! he had it more than fifteen years.

Amel. Take this. It is the last farthing I have.

Soph. [*runs to her drawer.*] Here is my thimble; it is gold. Sell it, my poor little man. I have a brass one left.

Godf. No; keep your thimble, cousin. Stop, my boy, I can help you. [*Takes out his buckles, and gives them to him.*] I have another pair of pinchbeck. You will certainly get three dollars for these. I can give them away, for they are my own. My godfather made me a present of them for my birth-day. [*Sophia offers him her thimble, and Godfrey his buckles. Jonas hesitates.*]

Jonas. No; I will not have them. My father would think I had stolen them.

Soph. Take my thimble, at least.

Godf. Won't you take my buckles? You will make me angry. Take them, I say.

Jonas. O dear! would you have me deprive you of your ornaments?

Godf. Do not be uneasy. God will repay me, perhaps, more than I give you. Your father wants bread; I have no father to maintain.

Soph. Go, and take care of yourself.

Jonas. At least take back your thimble.

Soph. No ; it is not mine now.

Char. If you ever pass our way, I will do something for you.

Amel. It is in Green Square ; any one will show you Mr. Richmond's.

Jonas. Great folks seldom ask me into their houses. I am sometimes taken down into the kitchen.

So. Well, enough of this. Your father may be uneasy on your account, and ours may soon return.

Jon. Your father, miss ? do you expect him soon ?

Soph. Yes, go your ways, else he who took your handkerchief and money may take this from you too.

Jonas. But I hope you are sure not to be scolded.

Godf. No, never fear. Good by.

Jonas. The good-natured little souls. [*Exit.*

Char. I am very sorry you have deprived yourself of your buckles, master Godfrey.

Amel. You have set us a good example.

Godf. I only followed that of Sophia. I should be happy in the opportunity to do a good action, even if it had not been furnished by the mean behavior of Charles. I shall now look with pleasure at my pinchbeck buckles !

Enter Mr. Melfort, followed by Jonas.

The children get close together. Sophia and Godfrey cast a side look at Jonas, and whisper together.

Mr.M. [*to the Misses Richmond.*] Your servant, ladies ! I thank you for the honor you have done my daughter. But give me leave to hear, in your presence, what this boy has to say. He was wait-

ing for me upon the stairs, and cannot leave, he says, until he has spoken to me in your hearing. Come, boy, what have you to say?

Jonas. [*to Sophia and Godfrey.*] My good miss and master, I beg you not to be angry with me; but I cannot help speaking, as it would be wrong in me to keep what you have compelled me to take, without the consent of your father. I know that children have nothing of their own to give away.

Mr. M. I don't understand you?

Jonas. I am going to explain, sir. This young master called me from the window to come in and play upon my violin for these ladies. There was another little gentleman along with them, a very handsome, but a very ill-natured rogue.

Mr. M. What! my son?

Jonas. I beg pardon. That word escaped me. I played my best, such tunes as I knew, and this good company were so kind as to give me a piece of cake, a clean handkerchief to wrap it in, and almost a handful of money; I don't know how much.

Mr. M. Well, what followed?

Jon. The ill-natured little gentleman took away the cake, which I intended to carry to my poor father, who is blind. I should not have cared for this; but he slipped out of the room, and, when I was going away quite overjoyed with my little bundle, he watched for me in the passage, took the handkerchief and money from me by force, and broke my violin in pieces. Look, here it is, [*crying*]—All my riches, that supported me and my father.

Mr. M. Did Charles commit such a malicious, ill-natured action? What! my son?——

Char. His behavior in every thing else makes this very probable. Ask Sophia herself.

Mr. M. Do not let it afflict you, my man; I will indemnify you. Is this all?

Jonas. No, sir. In my trouble I returned to tell these good little gentlefolks the whole affair. They had not money enough to pay for the damage; so this pretty miss gave me her gold thimble, and this young gentleman his silver buckles. I could not possibly keep them: my father would have thought I had stolen them. I knew you were coming home, so I waited to return them, and here they are. But I have no fiddle now! O my poor father!

Mr. M. What an account you have given me! Is it you, or you, my generous children, whom I should most admire? Excellent boy! in indigence, to lose all; and yet, through fear of doing wrong, to risk letting a father, whom you gratefully love, perish with hunger!

Jonas. Is it a great matter not to be a rogue? No; one never thrives on ill-gotten bread. That's what my father and mother have often told me. If you would only please to buy me another fiddle, it would make amends. Whatever more the thimble and buckle would have brought, God will repay me.

Mr. M. Your father and you must be endowed with extraordinary uprightness of heart not even to suspect the depravity of others! God will make use of me as an instrument to impart his blessings

to you. You may stay here, and wait upon Godfrey, till we see what we can do better for you.

Jonas. What! wait upon this little angel of a gentleman! O, I should be delighted [*bows to Godfrey.*] But, no, [*sorrowfully*] I cannot leave my father. Without me, how would he do to live? What! I live amid abundance, and he in poverty? O no.

Mr. M. Excellent child! who is your father?

Jonas. An old blind laborer, whom I supported by playing on the fiddle. It is true, neither he nor I seldom eat any thing but bread and milk. But God gives us enough for the day, and we take no care for the morrow; He provides for that also.

Mr. M. Well, I will take care of your father, and, if he wishes, get him into the asylum for the blind, where he will be supported. You can go and see him when you please. [*Jonas, after an exclamation of joy, runs about the room quite transported.*]

Jonas. What, my dear father! That will make him die with joy. I cannot stop any longer, but must go and bring him here. [*Runs out. Sophia and Godfrey take Mr. Melfort's hands.*]

Mr. M. My dear children! how happy would this day be to me, if, while I admire the generosity of your sentiments, the idea of my son's unworthiness did not intervene to poison my happiness! But no, it shall not trouble me. God has given me another son in you, my dear Godfrey. If you are not so by birth, you are by the ties of blood, and by congenial worthiness of heart. Yes, you shall be my

son. But where is Charles? Seek him, and bring him hither to me. [*Godfrey goes out.*

Soph. It is almost an hour since he was here. While the little boy was playing a minuet to us, he disappeared with his piece of cake.

Godf. [*returning.*] He was seen going into the confectioner's shop. John has gone for him.

Mr. M. Now, children, step into my study. I wish to know what answer he will have the assurance to make. When I want you, I will call you.

Char. and Amel. Then we shall take our leave.

Mr. M. No, my dears! I will send word to your father and mother, that you will spend the rest of the evening with us. Probably the generous little Jonas and his old father will also be our guests. I need something to assuage the cruel wound that Charles has given my heart, and I know of nothing more salutary than the conversation of such amiable children as you.

Soph. [*listening.*] I think I hear Charles coming.

[Mr. M. opens his study-door. The children withdraw.

Scene II. *Mr. Melfort alone.*

I have long dreaded a discovery of this disagreeable nature, but could not have suspected him of any thing so horrid. It is perhaps not yet too late to correct his vices. Alas! why am I obliged to try a desperate remedy?

Enter Charles.

Cha. What are your commands, father?

Mr.M. Where have you been? Were you not in your room?

Cha. Our tutor has gone out. Godfrey was below stairs. Therefore, after studying all the afternoon, I grew tired of being alone.

Mr.M. Why did you not, like Godfrey, join the little company that I found with your sister?

Cha. So I did; but those misses treated me ill——

Mr. M. How? You astonish me.

Cha. First, they drank tea, without asking me to have a drop. On the contrary, they showed me all the spite in the world. Then Godfrey picked up a little beggar brat in the street, and brought him to play the fiddle to them. He gave him some of the cake that was brought up, and me not a bit. They danced, but not one of the ladies would dance with me, although there were three of them, and no gentleman except Godfrey. What could I do here? I went down to the door to look at the passers-by.

Mr.M. Only to the door? What was it then that passed at the corner of the street, between a little fiddler and you? I have been told, that you beat him, broke his violin, and that he went away crying.

Cha. Yes, that is true, father; and if I had not been very good-natured, I should have got a constable to put him in bridewell. You shall hear, sir. When I saw him go out, I said to myself, I must give this poor creature something too for his trouble, for I knew that Godfrey had nothing of his own, and a beggar is ill paid with a morsel of cake. So

I took some money out of my purse, which I gave him, and he drew out a handkerchief to put it in. I perceived that it was one of my sister's handkerchiefs; you may see the mark. I begged him, very civilly, to return it, which he would not. So I took him by the collar, and we struggled together, and by accident I put my foot upon his fiddle.

Mr.M. [*with indignation.*] Silence, base liar. I can hear you no longer.

Cha. [*going to take his father's hand.*] My dear father, what makes you angry?

Mr.M. Begone, wicked boy, out of my sight! you shock me. [*He calls the children from the study.*]

Enter Sophia, Amelia, Charlotte, and Godfrey.

Mr.M. Come hither, my children; I will see none but those who merit my affection. As for you, quit my presence. But stop. You shall receive your sentence first. [*To Soph. and Godf.*] You have heard his charges against you.

Soph. Yes, father; and, were it not necessary for own justification, I would not say a word against him, for fear of increasing your anger.

Cha. Do not believe any thing she will tell you.

Mr.M. Be silent. I have already had proof of your detestable falsehoods. Lying is the high road to theft and murder. You have already committed the first, and perhaps want only strength and opportunity to attempt the other. Go on, Sophia.

Soph. In the first place, he has done no task this afternoon. Godfrey wrote his translation for him.

Mr. M. Is this true?

Godf. I cannot deny it.

Soph. Next he spilt a dish of tea upon Amelia's dress; and, while we were busy in wiping it, he remained at table, and emptied the tea-pot. There was none left for us. These young ladies are witnesses to what I assert. As to the cake——

Mr. M That is enough. All your baseness is discovered. Go to your chamber for this day; to-morrow morning I will put you out of the house. I will give you time enough to amend before you return; and, if that experiment does not succeed, other methods are not wanting to dispose of incorrigible reprobates, who disturb society by their misdeeds. Godfrey, tell John to see that he keeps in his room. Give orders, in the mean time, that your tutor be sent to me as soon as he returns.

Soph. and Godf. [*interceding for him.*] Dear father!—Dear uncle!

Mr. M. I cannot hear a word in his favor. He who is capable of taking from the poor, by force, the earnings of his industry; of breaking the instrument of a poor family, by which they gained their livelihood; and of seeking to justify such actions by falsehood and calumny, should be turned out of the society of men. I thank God that he has still left me two such excellent children as you. You shall be my consolation henceforward; and with you I will endeavor to make myself as happy this evening as the father of so unprincipled a son can be.

VANITY PUNISHED.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. WALLER.	MR. RAY,
MRS. WALLER.	MR. NASH, *Friends to Mr. Waller.*
VALENTINE, *their Son.*	
MICHAEL, *a Country Boy.*	MARTIN, *a Gardener.*

SCENE I.

A Garden. Mr. and Mrs. Waller.

Mr. Waller.

I SEE Valentine yonder walking in the garden, with a book in his hand. I am afraid it is rather through vanity, than from any real desire of improving himself, that he always appears to be busy in his reading.

Mrs. W. What makes you think so, my dear?

Mr. W. Don't you remark that he casts a side-look now and then, to see if any one takes notice of him?

Mrs. W. And yet his masters give a very flattering account of his diligence, and they all agree that he is very forward for his age.

Mr. W. That's true. But, if my suspicions are

correct, and if the little he can know has made him conceited, I would rather that he knew nothing, and were modest.

Mrs. W. That he knew nothing ?

Mr. W. Yes, my dear. A man without very great extent of knowledge, but upright, modest, and industrious, is a more estimable member of society, than a learned man, whose studies have turned his head, and puffed up his heart.

Mrs W. I cannot think my son of that description

Mr. W. Heaven forbid. But, whilst we are here in the country, I shall have more opportunities of observing him ; and I am resolved to take advantage of the first chance that shall offer, to clear my doubts. I see him coming towards us. Leave me alone with him a moment. [*Ex. Mrs. W.*

Enter Valentine.

Val. [*to Michael, whom he pushes back.*] No ; go away. Father, 'tis that little fool of a country boy, who always comes to interrupt me in my reading.

Mr. W. Why do you call that good-natured child a little fool ?

Val. Why, father, he knows nothing——

Mr. W. Of what *you* have learnt, I grant ; but then he knows many things that you do not ; and you may both inform each other a good deal, if you would communicate what you know to each other.

Val. He may learn a good deal of me, but what can I learn from him ?

Mr. W. If ever you should have a farm, do you think that it would be of no service to you to have

an early notion of the labors of the country; to learn to distinguish trees and plants; to know the times of sowing and harvest, and to study the wonders of vegetation? Michael possesses these different parts of knowledge, and desires to share them with you. They will perhaps be hereafter of great use to you. Those, on the contrary, which you could communicate, would be of no service to him. So that you see, in this intercourse, all the advantage is on your side.

Val. Well, but father, would it become me to learn any thing from a little country boy?

Mr. W. Why not, if he is capable of instructing you? I know of no real distinction among men, except that of useful talents and good manners; and you must own that, in both these points, he has equally the advantage over you.

Val. What, in good manners too?

Mr. W. In every station, good manners consists in treating all persons as our duty prescribes. He does so, by showing a particular attachment and complaisance to you. Do you do the same to him? Do you make a return of mildness and good will? And yet he appears to merit them. He is active and intelligent. I believe him to be possessed of good-nature, spirit, and good sense. You ought to think yourself very happy in having so amiable a companion, with whom you may at once amuse and improve yourself. His father is my foster-brother, and has always had a remarkable affection for me. I am pretty sure that Michael has the same

for you. See how the poor little fellow lingers about the terrace-walk, to meet you. Take care to use him with civility. There is more honor and integrity in his father's cottage, than in many palaces. His family have been our tenants for some generations, and I should be glad to see the connexion continued between our children. [*He goes out.*

Val. [*alone.*] Yes, a fine connexion indeed! I think father is joking. This little country boy teach me any thing! No, I will surprise him now so much with my learning, that he will not think of talking to me of his own, I'll warrant him.

Enter Michael.

Mich. You won't have my little nosegay then, master Valentine?

Val. Nosegay? Pshaw! it contains neither ranunculus nor tulip!

Mich. Why, it is true, they are only field flowers, but they are pretty; and I thought you might like to know them by their names.

Val. A great matter, indeed, to know the names of your herbs! You may carry them where you found them.

Mich. Well now, if I had known that, I would not have taken the trouble to gather them. I was resolved not to go home yesterday evening, without bringing you something; and, as I came back from work, though it was rather late, and I had a great appetite for my supper, I stopped in our fields to gather them by moonlight.

Val. You talk of the moon! do you know how big it is?

Mich. Heh! fegs! as big as a cheese.

Val. Ignorant little clown!

[Struts with an air of importance, while Michael stands staring at him.

Look here. [*showing his book.*] This is Telemaque. Have you ever read it?

Mich. That is not in the Spelling-book: our schoolmaster never taught me about Tellymack.

Val. No, it is none of your country books.

Mich. Nay, how should I have read it then? But let us see it.

Val. Don't think of touching it with your dirty hands! [*holding one of them up.*] Where did you buy these tanned leather gloves?

Mich. Gloves! it is my hand, master Valentine.

Val. The skin is so hard, one may cut it into shoe-soles.

Mich. It is not with idleness that they are grown so hard. You know how to talk very well, I dare say, and yet I would not change conditions with you. To work honestly, and offend nobody, is all that I know, and it would be no harm if you knew as much. Good by, sir. [*Exit.*

Val. [*alone.*] I think the little clown had a mind to make game of me. But I see company coming on the terrace-walk. I must put on a studious air

[He sits down, seeming to read in his book with great attention.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Waller, Mr. Ray, Mr. Nash.

Mr. W. What a fine evening! Would you

choose, gentlemen, to take a walk up this slope, to see the setting sun ?

Mr. R. I was going to mention it. The weather is delicious, and the western sky without a cloud.

Mr. N. I shall be sorry to go far from the nightingale. Do you hear her charming melody, madam ?

Mrs. W. I was absorbed in thinking. My heart was filled with ecstasy.

Mr. R. How can any person live in the city during this charming weather ?

Mr. W. Valentine, will you walk up the hill with us to see the sun setting ?

Val. No, I thank you, father. I am reading something here that gives me more pleasure.

Mr. W. If you speak truth, I pity you ; and if you do not——Come, gentlemen, there is not a moment to lose. Let us continue our walk.

[They ascend the hill.

Val. [*seeing them at a good distance.*] There, they are almost out of sight ; I need now be under no constraint. [*Puts the book into his pocket.*] What an opinion these gentlemen will have of my diligence ! I should like to be a bird, and fly after them, to hear the praises that they are giving me.

[Saunters about, yawning and listless, for nearly a quarter of an hour.

I am tired, after all, of being here alone. I can do better ! The sun is now set, and I hear the company returning. I will slip into the wood, and hide myself, so that they shall scarcely find me. My mother will send all the servants with torches to

look for me. They will talk of nothing but me the whole evening, and will compare me with those great philosophers that have been known to go astray in their learned meditations, and to lose themselves in woods. My adventure will make a fine noise! Now for it. [*He goes into the wood.*

SCENE II. *Mr. and Mrs. Waller, Mr. Ray, Mr. Nash, and Martin.*

Mr. R. I never saw weather more pleasing, nor a more charming scene.

Mr. W. My pleasure, gentlemen, has been doubled, by enjoying it in your company.

Mr. N. The nightingale too still continues her song. Her voice seems to grow more tender as night comes on. I am sorry Mrs. Waller does not seem to listen to it with as much pleasure as before.

Mrs. W. Because I am anxious about my son. I do not see him in the garden. [*She calls.*] Valentine!—He does not answer. [*Perceiving the gardener, she calls him.*] Martin, have you seen my son?

Mar. Yes, madam; about ten minutes ago I saw him turn towards the grove.

Mrs. W. Towards the grove! Bless me, he may lose himself? Pray run after him, and find him.

Mar. Yes, madam. [*He goes out.*

Mrs. W. Mr. Waller, won't you go with him?

Mr. W. No, my dear; I am not uneasy for my part. Martin will be able to find where he is.

Mrs. W. But if he should take a different direction? I am much frightened!

M .N. Make yourself easy, madam. Mr. Ray and I will take the two sides of the wood, while the gardener takes the middle. He will certainly be found.

Mrs. W. Ah, gentlemen, I did not dare to ask it of you, but you know the feelings of a mother.

Mr. W. Gentlemen, do not give yourselves so much trouble, I'd rather you would not.

Mr. R. Do not take it amiss that we comply with Mrs. Waller's request, rather than yours.

Mr. W. I must confess it is against my wishes.

Mr. N. We will receive your reproaches at our return. [*Mr. R. and Mr. N. go towards the grove.*]

SCENE III. *Mr. and Mrs. Waller.*

Mrs. W. Why, my dear husband, whence comes this indifference about your son?

Mr. W. Do you think that I love him less than you? No, but think I know better how to love him.

Mrs. W. And what if he could not be found?

Mr. W. I should be very glad of it.

Mrs. W. What, that he should pass the night in a gloomy wood? What would become of the poor child? and what would become of me?

Mr. W. You would both be cured. He of his vanity, and you of your injudicious fondness, that upholds him in it.

Mrs. W. What do you mean, my dear?

Mr. W. I am now convinced of what I only suspected in the morning. The boy's head is filled with excessive vanity, and all his reading is mere ostentation. He has lost himself on purpose to make us

look for him, and to appear absent and forgetful through intense study. It gives me more pain that his mind should wander from a right way of thinking, than if his steps really went astray in the wood. He will be unhappy all his life, if he be not cured of it in time; and there is nothing but a wholesome humiliation that can save him.

Mrs. W. But do you consider——

Mr. W. Yes, every thing. He is eleven years old. If he can profit at all by his natural sense, or learning, the light of the moon and the direction of the wind may guide him sufficiently to clear the wood.

Mrs. W. But if he has not that thought?

Mr. W. He will better see the necessity of profiting by the lessons I have given him upon the subject. He is intended for the army, and, as a soldier must pass many nights without shelter, he will now know what it is, and not go to a camp quite raw and inexperienced to be laughed at by his companions. The air is not very cold at this season of the year; and, for one night, he will not die of hunger. Since, by his folly, he has brought himself into trouble, let him get out of it again, or suffer a few of its disagreeable consequences.

Mrs. W. No; I cannot agree to it; and, if you don't send the people after him, I will go myself.

Mr. W. Well, my dear, I will quiet your fears; although I am sorry that you will not let me follow my plan, as I intended. I will send little Michael to join him as it were by chance. Colin too shall be at a small distance, to run to them in case of any

accident. As to any thing more, do not ask it; I have taken my resolution, and do not choose, by a blind weakness, to deprive my son of a lesson that may be of great service to him. Here are our friends coming back with Martin.

Mrs. W. O heavens! they have not found him.

Mr. W. I am glad of it.

Enter Mr. Ray and Mr. Nash.

Mr. N. Our search has been in vain; but, if Mr. Waller will let us have some servants and lights——

Mr. W. No, gentlemen; you have complied with my wife's request, you will now listen to mine. I am a father, and think I know my duty as one. Let us go into the parlor, and I will give you an account of my design. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The middle of the wood. Enter Valentine.*

Val. What have I done! fool that I am! It is dark night, and I don't know which way to turn. [*calls.*] Father! father!—Nobody answers. I am undone; what will become of me! [*cries.*] O mother! where are you? Answer your son this once.—Heavens! what is that running through the wood? If it should be a robber! Help! help! help!

Enter Michael.

Mich. Who's there? Who is it that cries so piteously? What, is it you, sir? How do you happen to be here at this time of night?

Val. O, dear Michael, my dear friend, I have lost my way.

Mich. [*looking at him first with an air of surprise, and then bursting into a loud laugh.*] You don't say so? I your dear Michael? your dear friend? You mistake; I am only a dirty little country boy. Don't you remember? Nay, let go my hand. The skin is only fit to cut up for shoe-soles.

Val. My dear friend, excuse my impertinence, and for pity's sake guide me home. My mother will pay you well.

Mich. [*surveying Valentine from head to foot.*] Have you finished reading your Tellymack?

Val. [*looking down, confused.*] Ah, pray now——

Mich. [*putting his finger to the side of his nose, and looking up to the sky.*] Tell me, my little wise man, how big may the moon be just now?

Val. Nay, spare me, I beg of you, and guide me out of this wood.

Mich. You see then, master, that one may be a dirty little country boy, and yet be good for something. What would you give to know your way, instead of knowing how big the moon is?

Val. I own my fault, and I promise never to show any pride for the future.

Mich. Well, that's clever. But this repenting, through necessity, may hang only by a thread. It is not amiss that a young gentleman should see what it is to look upon a poor man's son like a dog, and play with him according to his fancy. To show you that an honest clown does not bear malice, I will pass the night with you, as I have passed many a one with our sheep on the hills. To-morrow morn-

ing early I will take you home to your father. Here then I'll share my bedchamber with you.

Val. O, my good Michael.

Mich. [*stretching himself under a tree.*] Come, sir, settle yourself at your ease.

Val. But where is this bedchamber of yours?

Mich. Here. [*striking the ground.*] Here is my bed; take your place. It is wide enough for both of us.

Val. What, must we lie here in the open air?

Mich. I assure you, sir, the king himself has not a better couch. See what a fine ceiling we have overhead; how many bright diamonds adorn it; and then our handsome silver lamp. [*pointing to the moon.*] Well, what do you think of it?

Val. My dear Michael, I am dying with hunger.

Mich. I dare say I can help you there too. See, here are some potatoes. Dress them as you please.

Val. Why they are raw.

Mich. It is only to boil or roast them. Make a fire.

Val. We want a light to kindle one! and then where shall we find coal or wood?

Mich. [*smiling.*] Cannot you find all that in your books?

Val. O no, my dear Michael.

Mich. Well, I'll show you that I know more than you and all your Tellymacks.

[Takes a tinder-box, flint, and steel, from his pocket.

Crack! there's a fire already! now you shall see.

[He gathers dry leaves, and, placing them round the tinder, fans with his hat until they take fire.

We shall soon have a warm blazing hearth. [*he*

puts pieces of dry wood upon the lighted leaves.] Do you see? [*lays the potatoes close to the fire, and sprinkles them with dust.*] This must serve, instead of ashes, to hinder them from burning.

[Having placed the potatoes properly, and covered them with more dust, he turns the burning coals over them, adds fresh wood, and fans the whole into a blaze.]

Have you a finer fire in your father's kitchen? Come, now they will soon be done.

Val. O, my good friend, what return can I make for your kindness?

Mich. Return? Pooh! when one does good, it pays

itself. But, stop a moment, while the potatoes are roasting, I will bring some hay for you. I saw a good deal lying in one part of the wood. You can sleep upon that like a prince. But take care of the roast while I am away. [*Goes out singing.*

Val. Fool that I am! how could I be so unjust as to despise that child. What am I, compared to him? How little am I in my own eyes, when I examine his behavior and mine! But it shall never happen again. Henceforward I will not despise others because they are less wealthy or less learned than myself. I will not be proud nor vain.

[He walks about, and gathers dry sticks for the fire.

Enter Michael, dragging a large bundle of hay.

Mich. Here is a bed of down, coverlet and all. I'll now spread you a bed quite soft and fragrant.

Val. I thank you, my friend. I would help you, but I don't know how to set about it.

Mich. I don't need assistance. I can do it alone. Go warm yourself.

[He unties the bundle, spreads part of it on the ground, and reserves the rest for a covering.

That's finished. This will make a nice comfortable bed. Now let us think of supper. [*takes a potato from the fire, and feels of it.*] They are done. Eat them while they are warm, they are best then.

Val. What, won't you eat some with me?

Mich. No, thank you. There's just enough for you.

Val. How? do you think?——

Mich. You are too kind. I won't touch them. I am not hungry. Besides, I shall have as much

pleasure in seeing you eat them. Are they good?

Val. Excellent, my dear Michael.

Mich. I dare say you never tasted sweeter at your father's table.

Val. That's very true.

Mich. Have you finished? Come, then, your bed is ready for you.

[Valentine lies down. Michael spreads the rest of the hay over him, and then takes off his jacket.

The night is cold; here, cover yourself with this too. If you find yourself chilly, come to the fire; I'll take care that it is kept burning. Good night.

Val. Dear Michael, I shall never be easy until I make amends for treating you ill.

Mic. Think no more of it; I do not. The lark will awake us to-morrow morning at break of day.

[Valentine falls asleep, and Michael sits close by him to keep the fire burning, and within bounds. At break of day Michael awakes him.]

Come, master Valentine, you have slept enough. The lark has already opened her song, and the sun will soon appear above the hills. Let us set out and go to your father's.

Val. [*rubbing his eyes.*] What, already? so soon? Good morning, my dear Michael!

Mich. Good morning, master Valentine! How did you sleep?

Val. [*rising.*] As sound as a rock. Here is your jacket. I thank you a thousand, thousand times. I shall never forget you as long as I live.

Mic. Do not talk of thanks. I am as happy as you are. Come, walk with me. I'll guide you. [*Exe.*

SCENE V. *A room in Mr. Waller's house. Mr. and Mrs. Waller.*

Mrs. W. In what terrors have I passed this night! I fear, my dear, that some accident has happened to him. We must send out people to look for him.

Mr. W. Make yourself easy, my love; I will go myself. But who knocks thus early? [*the door opens.*] Look, here he is.

Enter Valentine and Michael.

Mrs. W. [*running to her son.*] Ah! do I see you again, my dear child?

Mich. Yes, madam, there he is, ifegs! a little better mayhap than before you lost him.

Mr. W. Is that the case?

Val. Yes, father, I have been well punished for my pride. What will you give him that has reformed me?

Mr. W. A good reward, accompanied with my endless gratitude.

Val. [*presenting Michael to him.*] Well, this is he to whom you owe it. I owe him my friendship too, and he shall always share it.

Mr. W. If that be so, I'll make him a little present every year of a couple of guineas, for curing you of an intolerable fault.

Mrs. W. And I will make him one of the same amount, for having preserved my son to me.

Mich. If you pay me for the satisfaction which you feel, I should pay you for that which I felt. You therefore owe me nothing.

Mr. W. No, my little man, we shall not depart from our words. But let us all four go to breakfast. Valentine shall relate his adventures of the night.

Val. Yes, father; and I shall not spare myself, though I should be turned into ridicule for it. I blush for my folly, but hope I shall never have to blush for the same behavior again.

Mr. W. My dear son, you know not how happy you will render your mother and me, by proving by your future conduct that your reformation is sincere, and will never suffer a relapse.

[Valentine takes Michael by the hand. Mr. Waller gives his to his lady, and they all go into the next apartment.]

THE VETERAN DISMISSED WITH HONOR.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

LORD CORNWALLIS.	BERTRAM,
OFFICER, *attending him.*	CECILIA,
CAPTAIN HARLOW.	HELEN, *their Children.*
MRS. HARLOW.	

The SCENE *is at the entrance of a grove, in front of the house of Captain Harlow, somewhat distant from the road.*

SCENE I.

Bertram and Cecilia. Cecilia is discovered sitting on a fallen tree, picking strawberries. Bertram brings her others, and both hats that hold the strawberries are neatly lined with leaves.

Bertram.

LOOK, sister, we shall soon have enough.

Cec. I don't know, Bertram, how I shall dispose of mine; my hat is too full already.

Ber. It can't be long before Helen brings the basket; indeed she might have gone to the house, found one, and returned in much less

time than this. In the meantime, Cecilia, you can put them in your apron.

Cec. Yes, indeed; that would make a fine business: To spot it all from top to bottom! What do you suppose mother would say of that scheme? No, I have thought of something else. Your hat is biggest; so I'll add my strawberries to yours, and you shall gather more, whilst I am picking these.

Ber. Well said; and, in the interim, Helen cannot fail to come, and then we shall have enough.

Cec. When they are all together, we shall see.

Ber. What's over when the baskets are filled, we'll take ourselves.

Cec. I think we shall not have much appetite to taste them afterwards. Ah, brother! 'tis the last time we shall eat with our father this year, and who can tell that we shall ever see him again!

Ber. O don't be dejected, sister. In a battle it is not every one that's killed.

Cec. O frightful war! if men were not so wicked, but would love each other, as we do——

Ber. Mighty fine indeed! And don't we quarrel every day for trifles? We each think we are in the right; and frequently it would puzzle one to find out which is. 'Tis just the same among grown men.

Ce. They ought at least to be friends again as soon we are. Our quarrels never end in bloodshed.

Ber. No; because our parents settle them; but men, Cecilia, are not children; and won't let themselves be governed, if they have means of self-defence. Had we ought to suffer wrong?

Cec. You are always talking like a soldier!

Ber. A good reason why, because I am to be one. Look ye, sister; notwithstanding any thing you say against it, war is a very charming thing. Without it, how do you imagine we could live? for would the little property our father possesses be sufficient to support us? But don't cry. You grieve me.

Cec. Let me weep, dear brotner while we are alone. I would much rather do so here, than in the presence of father, it would afflict him.

Ber. Come, come; dry your eyes, and set to work for some amusement. I'll go fill your hat.

Cec. Go that way; for we have none left hereabouts. [*Bertram goes out.*] I would I were only learned enough, that I might pray to God, for he would hear me. Or at least, if I were big enough, I would, in that case, go to court, and fall before the king; and he, I'm sure, would grant me my father's dismission, when I begged and prayed him to oblige me. He has served his country long enough, I think. [*She resumes picking strawberries.*

Enter Lord Cornwallis, and an Officer.

Lord C. [*whispering the Officer.*] Yonder is the house to which we were directed, where Captain Harlow lives. But what a charming little girl is here! I'll stop and have some conversation with her; please not to address me by my name, but as a companion. [*To Cecilia, tapping her upon the shoulder.*] You are very hard at work, I see, my pretty child.

Cec. O, sir, you frightened me.

Lord C. I ask your pardon, my dear. I did not mean to do so. And for whom are you gathering all those strawberries? They cannot but be very good, I fancy, picked by such a plump and snowy hand.

Cec. [*holding out the hat.*] I beg then you will take some, sir. Don't be afraid; for they are very clean. I wish I had a better plate to put them in.

[Lord C. and his attendant take some of the fruit.

Lord C. I never tasted better: do you sell them, my dear?

Cec. No, sir; though you were to give me — I can't tell how much.

Lord C. You are in the right; they are above all value, gathered by so sweet a little hand.

Cec. Fie! how you talk, sir! but 'tis not for that; they should be at your service, were they not intended for my dear father [*wiping her eyes.*] We have not gathered any for him yet, this season; and perhaps these will be the last he will eat.

Lord C. What, my dear, he's ill then? and you think he'll not live?

Offic. It is to be hoped, his illness is not yet desperate, since he thinks of eating strawberries.

Cec. No, not that. 'Tis true indeed he has been troubled with the rheumatism all last winter, to a very great degree; and it is not yet quite cured. But, cured or not, he must set out to-morrow.

Lord C. And why? is his departure so needful?

Cec. O, because his regiment then goes through the village; and he must join it on the march.

Lord C. His regiment ?

Cec. Yes, lord Corwallis's, that's going to America.

Lord C. [*aside to the officer.*] This must be one of Captain Harlow's children.

Cec. [*overhearing him.*] Yes, that's my father. Do you know him ?

Lord C. This gentleman and I are his comrades.

Cec. What ! is the regiment so near ? Will it go through the town to-day ?

Lord C. No; not till to-morrow. We are come, my dear, before it; and—and [*aside to the officer.*] What excuse can I make ?—And a wheel belonging to our carriage being broken hard by, we tried to get a little shade here while it was mending. And now, I fancy, it must be set to rights. This path, I take it, leads directly to the road again ?

Cec. No, sir; it takes you to the village.

Lord C. And the village, I suppose, belongs to your father ?

Cec. Belongs to him ? I wish he were so rich; no, he owns nothing but a little cottage, with a garden, this small grove, and yonder meadow. When he's not on service, he passes his time here with us.

Lord C. He was ill then in the winter ?

Cec. Yes indeed, sir, to our sorrow; and he could not move a limb. Besides, a wound, which he received many years ago below the temple, had broken out afresh. And now that he is almost well he must go again to meet with new misfortunes.

Lord C. Why, in such a situation, does he not

sell out? He might procure sufficient attestations from the surgeon.

Cec. Mother did that in private for him; but her letters were not answered. Certainly the king refuses to believe her; or perhaps *that* lord Cornwallis, who commands the regiment, is so cruel——

Lord C. Truly, I believe lord Cornwallis would not like to lose so good an officer as your father, by whose instructions myself and all the younger officers may learn so much.

Cec. And yet you don't appear so very young; but are your father and mother both living?

Lord C. [*a little disconcerted.*] Do you doubt it?

Cec. O, I warrant they cried at parting with you. How could they consent to lose you? I remember how much grief it caused mother and us, when first my eldest brother went abroad to study; and that's nothing in comparison with war.

Lord C. I can't tell that; I have left them, after many separations; in which case 'tis nothing to leave one another. Besides which, my father went with me when I first went to camp.

Cec. Did he? O, those fathers, who are soldiers themselves, are a little hard, I can tell you; but yet that's not the case with my father. He's very indulgent! Why, a child is scarce so gentle! 'Tis on the point of honor only he can never be persuaded; so that, after all, I fancy he is to blame, and no one else, for still remaining in the service.

Lord C. Indeed!—how is that?

Cec. Because he never asked for dismission. He

is ever saying, people would imagine him a coward, should he quit the service during war. He only wishes he may always have strength enough to sit on horseback; and then says he'll part with every drop of blood he has, to serve his country. Well, he will be satisfied some time or other; but then we poor children shall be without a father.

Lord C. Recollect, your father has been hitherto preserved from danger, and why should he not still continue as safe? It is not every ball that hits.

Cec. But those, that do hit, commonly kill their man; and, in the number, may there not be one that will reach father?

Lord C. That's true indeed; but what sweet little lady is this?

Cec. My sister Helen.

Enter Helen.

So, Helen, you are come at last I see; where have you been staying?

Hel. Why, mother would make me help her do up father's portmanteau.

Cec. Where's the basket? let me have it, sister.

Hel. Have you gathered berries enough to fill it?

Cec. You shall see. [*emptying them into the basket.*] Your pardon, gentlemen.

Lord C. O, don't mind us. [*Whispering to the Officer.*] What lovely children!

Hel. [*whispering to Cec.*] Who may these be?

Cec. [*whispering to Helen.*] Officers in lord Cornwallis's regiment.

Hel. Do they come for father?

Cec. No; they have arrived before the regiment, which will not go through the town till to-morrow, as father expected.

Hel. Ah, I wish all the officers, together with the regiment, were at Jericho.

Cec. Speak lower, Helen. If the gentlemen should hear you——

Hel. Let them hear me, if they like. What! they come to take away father, and shall we not have leave to complain?

Lord C. [*whispering the Officer.*] Methinks we are not looked upon too favorably here.

Offi. Why, my lord, don't you disclose yourself, and mention the good news you bring their father?

Lord C. No. Their openness, as well as the affection they evince in favor their parents, delights me.

Cec. [*to Helen.*] Poor Bertram's hard at work, whilst we are chattering here without once thinking of him. I'll go, and help him. Stay you here, and take care how you speak before these gentlemen.

Hel. Go; I know what's proper.

Cec. Here's my sister Helen; I present her to you, gentlemen.

Helen. [*with a little forwardness.*] Your servant, gentlemen.

Lord C. [*to Cec.*] She has a countenance as resolute as yours is timid.

Cec. She'll stay here to entertain you, gentlemen; for I must run and help my brother gather strawberries; so that all of us may go back sooner to

father. Will you permit me to inform him of your visit? He'll be very happy to receive you.

Hel. No; he won't be very happy to receive you, neither will any one among us; we should be quite happy were we left alone for the present.

Cel. I hope your kindness will excuse this little madcap.

Hel. O yes, to be sure! excuse me? Why these gentlemen are sensible that little girls, when strangers are at table, must not speak a word; and I have twenty thousand things to tell father at parting, which will otherwise go near to break my heart.

Lord C. Dear children, don't fear any thing; you shall not be disturbed by us in your delightful conversation.

[Cecilia makes a grateful curtesy and withdraws.

Hel. But pray tell me, gentlemen, what reason has the king for taking away a good father from us poor children? Does he think we don't want one to bring us up?

Lord C. No; but then do you think he don't want good soldiers to go out and fight?

Hel. And what necessity for fighting? Or, supposing there should be any, surely our father, when he would stay at home to give his children a good education, is not useless to his country.

Lord C. No, indeed; especially, my pretty little Helen, if his other little ones improve as much as you do.

Hel. I believe you jest. I know I am thought a little forward in the family; and I have heard

it said, that if I had but a cockade, I could not fail to make a tolerable soldier.

Lord C. Ha, ha, ha! A little Amazon! You would become a perfect hero!

Hel. I can tell you, that if I only had a sword, I would not be laughed at.

Lord C. Nay, if that's all, here's mine. I'll arm you with it according to martial rule.

Hel. Do. I should be very glad.

Lord C. [*presenting the sword, and stooping to kiss her.*] This is the first ceremony.

Hel. [*keeping him off.*] Softly! softly! I beseech you, sir.

Lord C. [*attempting it again.*] O, you are a charming child!

Hel. [*running from him.*] Brother! sister!

Lord C. Mighty well, miss soldier; 'a soldier, and afraid' of me I perceive.

Hel. I afraid of you! O no. But don't come too near, or I shall run and fetch father. He's an officer as well as you; and won't suffer any one to hurt his little Helen.

Lord C. Heaven forbid I should hurt you: it was only pleasantry.

Enter Bertram and Cecilia.

Ber. [*coming boldly forward.*] You cried out just now, Helen! I am come to your assistance.

Lord C. Against us, my little friend?

Ber. Aye, any one who hurts my sister.

Hel. Thank you, brother; but I did not mean to cry out quite so loud, and have no need of your

assistance ; for, you see, there's one I have disarmed. However, sir, [*returning Lord C. his sword,*] this once I grant you quarter. But don't come too near in future. I believe you understand me ?

Lord C. Why, I declare, you are an extraordinary little creature !

Cec. I am delighted to hear you talk ; but, gentlemen, we have gathered strawberries enough to share some with you. [*Presenting them the basket of strawberries.*] Let me request you to take some.

Lord C. No, indeed ; we don't intend to touch them ; they have a destination too respectable, for us to make free with them.

Cec. Those you take will be from our share ; and no harm will be done if we go without any. You belong to father's own regiment ; and 'tis fitting we should treat you with as much respect as we are able.

Hel. [*taking a nosegay from her bosom, and presenting it to Lord C.*] On that account, I beg you to accept this nosegay I gathered for myself. Father and mother have each had one, or I could not give you this ; but it belongs to me, sir, and I give it to you.

Lord C. And I, my dear, accept it with the greatest pleasure.

Hel. It is somewhat faded ; but, if you will stay a little, I'll gather you some jessamine, violets, and jonquils, in my garden.

Cec. Helen, you remember, I believe, the rose-bush before my window ; you may gather all the roses that are blown upon it.

Hel. Well. sir, shall I ?

Lord C. I thank you for your kindness, my dear child ; but the pleasure of conversing with you entertains me more than all the roses in the universe.

Hel. I have an idea strikes me. Possibly, you know what method an officer should take to quit the service honorably. Could you not afford us some good counsel to procure father's dismission ?

Cec. If you could, we should be very glad to give you every thing we have.

Ber. [*who has hitherto amused himself by playing with the hilt of Lord C.'s sword, and looking at his uniform.*] O yes, if you could only tell us how to keep father at home, my drum, spontoon, cartouch-box, and accoutrements, should be yours.

Hel. [*smilingly looking down.*] And I would give you freely, what you just sought to take by force.

Lord C. So many charming things all at once ! Believe me, if I did but know——

Cec. [*sorrowfully.*] You did but know ! So then we only make things worse, and grieve you that you cannot be of service to us,

Hel. I don't give up so soon. Lord Cornwallis, colonel of the regiment, will very soon pass this way. We three will throw ourselves before him, hang upon his clothes, and not let go till he has granted our desire.

Cec. Yes, sister, he shall see our tears ; and we will tell him how extremely ill father has been all winter ; how sick he is at present ; and how much we should lament his going from us. Do you

think, he would be so cruel as to send us from him, and not grant our request?

Lord C. I cannot think that of him, my good friends; but, if he is not already thus far come on his way, there's room to suppose he will longer delay setting out from London; and you know, in that case, you would lose your labor, as your father must march to-morrow. Happily, however, there is a gentleman, his particular friend, who can do every thing, as if he were my lord himself; and he is at present with the regiment, serving as a volunteer.

Ber. A volunteer?

Lord C. Yes; so they call it; one whose wish is to acquire a knowledge of the art of war, assisted by my lord's instruction. I can answer for it, he will grant whatever your father may wish.

Cec. And is he your friend?

Lord C. Yes, truly.

Cec. Then, for pity's sake, sir, speak to him in father's behalf, that he may not be parted from his family, who live by his means; and, if he must leave England, do soften, if you can, his service; and at any time, should he be sick or wounded——

Hel. Wounded! Don't wait, sir, till he is wounded; but, in case a sabre should be raised against him, run in and save him from the blow.

Lord C. [*aside.*] How difficult I find it to keep concealed! — No, generous little girls, fear nothing; I'll be answerable for his safety with my life.

Cec. We may rely upon you then? How much

you charm us! Yet do not forget to speak of him to the volunteer, you just now mentioned. I would say more on this subject; but your heart will tell you every thing I've left unsaid; and our father, whom we shall lose to-morrow, must be waiting for us.

Lord C. Go, dear children; but first take some trifle from me, as a recompense for that agreeable half hour I've spent in conversation with you. Here, my sweet Cecilia, take this ring, it is a little too big, but may soon be fitted to your finger.

Cec. [*refusing the ring.*] No, sir, mother would perhaps be displeased; and so too would father, whose least reproach I would not for the world deserve, particularly as to-morrow he must leave us.

Lord C. You must absolutely take it. Should he be displeased, I'll undertake to reconcile him, when he joins the regiment, if I cannot, by my speaking to the volunteer, prevent his leaving England.

Cec. [*taking it.*] Well then he shall in that case return it; and, if otherwise, I shall be very happy to remember you as often as I look upon it.

Hel. Come, sister; it is high time we were gone.

Lord C. And you, my lovely Helen, I suppose, would not be sorry to remember me. See, here's a copper etui, gilt; and, at the top, a composition stone, which is called a false diamond.

Hel. [*looking at it.*] I understand you; but there's nothing false about it, except your words. 'Tis gold, I'm certain, and a real diamond. I won't have it. You have been plundering for it. My father's a captain, sir, as well as you; but can't make such

presents, for he never went a plundering poor people's houses in his life.

Lord C. Take, take it; there's no plundering in the case. It would be useless to me in the field, and therefore, if you will not have it as a present, keep it for me, until my return.

Hel. O, that I will do, with all my heart.

Lord C. And now perhaps you have a kiss to give me as security.

Hel. No, no; I've told you the conditions.

Lord C. Well, I'll do all I'm able to win the prize.

Hel. And I'll keep the—the—*you know what*, sir, till that time. Come, brother.

Ber. Go first; I'll follow you immediately. I've something I would say in private to this gentleman

Lord C. I'll speak with you this moment.

[The officer, who had withdrawn some little time, returns, and gives Lord C. a pocket-book. They whisper.

Hel. [*whispering to Bertram.*] What! and should *you* like a present too?

Cec. [*likewise in a whisper.*] Fie, brother! I should not have suspected you of so much meanness.

Ber. And fie *you*, sisters, who can entertain so mean an opinion of your brother! I have something very different, and much more important, which I should like to ask about.

Hel. Well now, if I were in a merry mood, I could not but laugh, at the gravity with which you speak of your important something.

Ber. Aye, and were you not my sister, I would make you squeak, miss Saucebox, for suspecting me.

Hel. [*going out with Cecilia.*] Well, manage your important something with discretion.

SCENE II. *Lord Cornwallis, Officer, and Bertram*

Lord C. I am glad, dear Bertram, you desire to stay. We were not quite acquainted; but now, and particularly as my friend here tells me they have not yet repaired our chaise, we shall have a few more minutes to talk with each other.

Ber. So we shall; but don't imagine I remain here to get something from you.

Lord C. How?

Ber. Because you gave each of my sisters a present, you might fancy I wanted one; but I protest, sir, I will not receive any thing.

Lord C. Unluckily for me, I have nothing to give.

Ber. Unluckily? I'm glad you have not; for now, neither can be tempted.

L. C. [*aside to the officer.*] I am charmed with his disinterestedness, and never saw a handsomer figure.

Ber. I have but one question to ask, sir?

Lord C. And what's that, my friend?

Ber. You told my sister, a gentleman was with the army as a volunteer. Pray what's a volunteer?

Lord C. A volunteer is a soldier who may fight or not, just as he chooses.

Ber. If I were to turn soldier, it should be to fight; and I would gladly be a volunteer on that condition.

Lord C. But a volunteer must have a great deal of money; have you any?

Ber. No; but the king has. And pray is not he obliged to keep his soldiers?

Lord C. No; for, as a volunteer is not obliged to fight, it is but just he should support himself.

Ber. I am sorry to hear this; but, if I wanted only bread and water, or should beg the regiment to receive me, sir, instead of my father;—what then?

Lord C. Poor child! and what sort of a figure would you cut before a company? You ought to have experience and authority.

Ber. If I have not enough of either to command, I must have surely to obey. Let me be any thing, provided I may serve.

Lord C. Would you be capable of long marches?

Ber. I'll go as far as I am able; and, when tired, be lifted among the baggage; or I'll ride upon a cannon. Are you fearful I should lag behind?

Lord C. But, if you were to serve instead of your father, you remember you must part with him, as much as if he went himself.

Ber. And don't you think I should rejoice to be the means of keeping him at home with my mother and sisters? You would lose little by such a change. Unhappily, my dear father will not be able long to serve; and I shall soon be what he was. I love a soldier's life from my heart. I know a great many marches, and can play them on my fife. Look, here's a book of songs; 'tis called the *Grenadier's Delight.* I'll give it you. I know the whole by heart.

Lord C. [*aside to the officer.*] I have a thought.—*To Ber.*] I would not wish a better present;

and, in return, I'll give you, not indeed a *book* of songs, my little Bertram, but a single song.

Ber. I may accept a song.

Lord C. [*feeling in his pocket.*] In the first place, here's one which you will give your father.

Ber. O, sir, he never sings now; he likes no music but that of the cannon.

Lord C. That's nothing. I'm sure you'll both be pleased with this, even if you only read it. And here's one for you. [*taking a paper from his pocket-book.*

Ber. [*jumping for joy.*] O, thank you! Let me see if I know it.

Lord C. No, Bertram; you shall read them or sing them after we are gone. [*He puts the two papers together, and thrusts them into Bertram's pocket.*] Let me put them in your pocket; and take care you don't lose them. Now farewell, my little friend; and, since you love a soldier's life, I'll have you for my comrade.

Ber. [*jumping into his arms.*] Yes, I will be so, I'll always love you; and the first engagement I am in, I'll all the while be at your side.

Offi. We will go, and tell the regiment.

Ber. Do; and pray, sir, give me a good word.

Lord C. [*retiring with the officer.*] I feel how much the father's heart must bleed to quit such lovely children; and rejoice, on that account, to be the bearer of such welcome tidings as the paper in Bertram's pocket will give him. Let us withdraw a little distance, where we may, unseen, remark him.

[They hide behind the trees.

Ber. [*sitting for a while profoundly thoughtful on the trunk of a tree; then rising and walking to and fro.*] Why should he desire to set father a singing? [*Takes the papers from his pocket.*] Ha! this paper's sealed! There's something funny in it, I suppose. Now let me see my own. Is this a song? It does not look like one. The words go, one after another, all along the line. [*reading.*] 'I promise to pay to Abraham Newland, or bearer, on demand, the sum of fifty pounds.' I don't know any tune that will suit these words. [*reading again.*] 'London, December 1, 1787, for the governor and company of the Bank of England, Philip

Stacy.' He means to make a fool of me, I fancy in calling this a song. 'Tis all about money Mr. Captain! Mr. Captain! [*Running out.*

SCENE III. *Bertram, Captain Harlow, Mrs. Harlow, Helen, and Cecilia.*

Capt.H. Where is he? [*Perceiving Bertram.* Bertram, where's my lord?

Ber. [*looking about him.*] My lord! I have not seen the least bit of a lord.

Hel. That handsome gentleman we talked with.

Cec. He who gave me this fine ring. Father says no one but a lord could make so rich a present.

Ber. [*vexed.*] Blockhead as I've shown myself, in not discovering who he was!

Cec. O, what a fine gentleman!

Hel. So good and so familiar! O, my sweet etui! I'll keep you all my life-time now.

Capt.H. How long has he been gone?

Ber. This moment I was running after him.

Capt.H. To-morrow, fortunately, I shall join his lordship; for it must be lord Cornwallis; it is his cypher that's engraven on the etui; and I can tell him then how much my children are obliged to his benevolence. I am however sorry I had not the opportunity of asking him to lodge one night with us. Should you not have been glad to entertain him, children?

Ber. O yes, father. He called me comrade, when he took his leave.

Hel. For my part, though I like him, yet I'm

glad he's gone ; for, had he staid, we should not have been able to talk as if we loved you.

Capt. H. Helen's in the right. I should not have been free to mix my tears with yours, dear children, in his presence.

Mrs. H. And on that very account I wish we might have had his company. The violence, you must have done your sorrows, would, in that case, have enabled me to govern mine ; and, since we must lose you to-morrow——

Cel. O, mother, do not mention that.

Capt. H. Dear children, probably my absence will not be long. Peace cannot be far off ; it is the wish of every person ; and, no sooner shall that wish be realized, than I will instantly return, and never part with you again.

Mrs. H. But till peace is settled, you must unavoidably be absent from England ; and what comfort remains for us, whilst you are gone ?

Cec. With what pleasure would I give him back his ring, if he would leave you with us ?

Hel. And I his pretty etui !

Ber. And I too his new-fashioned song. See here, father. Was there ever such a song before ?

Capt. H. Let's see. [*reading a little.*] What bounty in this nobleman ! and what a charming way of obliging ! He has given you here an order for receiving a whole pocket-full of gold !

Ber. What, has he tricked me ? When you see him to-morrow, give him back his money. I won't

have it. But there's something else; he has likewise given me a song for you.

Capt.H. A song for me, my little fellow? You are dreaming!

Ber. [*drawing the sealed paper from his pocket.*] No; here it is.

The Children. [*smiling, and approaching their father with looks of curiosity.*] A song! a song!

Capt.H. Good heavens! what's this? The king's coat-of-arms! [*He opens the packet with a trembling hand, and, looking at the signature, cries out*] and signet! [*then casting his eyes over the three or four first lines, breaks forth again*:] Dear wife, and little ones, rejoice!

Mrs. H. Yes, if you stay with us.

Capt. H. Let me read the letter through. [*The children crowd round him, and stand silent while he reads to himself.*] O, unexpected joy! [*continues reading.*] No, no! it must all be a dream, in which my imagination forms brilliant chimeras!—Yet stay, I'm awake, and every thing is real, though I could never have hoped for such happiness.

Mrs. H. I'm impatient to know every thing.

Cec. Well, dear father, what is it?

Hel. In what pain you keep us all, father!

Ber. Let me see your song?

Capt.H. [*embracing his wife and children.*] I am to stay with you, my life! We are not to be separated, my dear children! [*giving Mrs. H. the letter.*] Yes; read for yourself.

Mrs. H. I cannot; I tremble in every limb.

The Children. [*in a transport of joy.*] Father is to stay with us! father stays with us!

Capt. H. Yes, my children; I shall not go to America, nor leave you, and yet continue in the service in a high and honorable station!

Mrs. H. In what manner? how, my life?

Capt. H. The king, informed (how I know not) of my illness, and commiserating the condition I am in, permits my staying here in England; and, to recompense my services, (these are his own words,) confers upon me the command of Upnor Castle, with the rank of colonel.

Mrs. H. A colonel, my dear?

Cec. Joy! joy!

Hel. So then, father, there's not a greater man in all the army!

Ber. And you're a colonel? are you?

Capt. H. Yes; and, for the first time in my life, entirely happy. But, my dear, [*to Mrs. H.*] shall I be pardoned, when I tell you, such an honor is not on account of any step I took to get it! It has come, I cannot tell how.

Mrs. H. Yes; I know that very well. I did what I could, although I never asked for such an honor, joined to so much happiness. They must be both, however, placed to the account of my solicitation.

Hel. Ah, the naughty man! say I; but mother took greater care of us than he did.

Cec. So you deceived us, father?

Capt. H. Yes, my little dear; but what could I

have done? I've only this excuse to offer, that false modesty restrained me from requesting my dismission, although I should have thought I could not be of any real service to my country. I was not however quite sensible of my condition, but now I feel it; I feel within me, that my constitution is no longer fit for the fatigue of arms.

Mrs. H. And this false modesty would have been death to me, and left these children without a father, unless Providence had ordered your affairs much better. Every thing however is now pardoned. All I wish is, that the generous nobleman were here who brought us this glad news, that we might thank him for the kindness he has shown our little ones; and also for this message, which, if the truth were known, I dare engage he has in some degree been instrumental in procuring; for what likelihood is there that I, an unknown woman, should have succeeded far beyond what was wished.

Capt. H. At least that we might have enjoyed the opportunity of granting him the hospitality of one night's lodging with us.

Ber. We'll run different ways, and overtake him, if we can.

Capt. H. Go. It grieves me that I cannot follow you.

Hel. If we meet him, and he will only accompany us back, he shall have three kisses, instead of one.

SCENE IV. *Bertram, Captain Harlow, Mrs. Harlow, Cecilia, Helen, Lord Cornwallis, and the officer.*

Lord C. [*running from behind the trees, and catching Helen in his arms.*] Shall I? It is a match, my little maid. [*kissing her repeatedly.*]

Cec. and Ber. My lord! my lord!

Hel. [*a little out of countenance.*] You have almost scared me!

Capt. H. O my worthy general! what words will show you half my gratitude?

Mrs. H. How can my children and myself express our obligations? To whom we are indebted for such a blessing, we at present know not; but your lordship is the bearer of a paper, which restores to me a husband, and a father to my children.

Lord C. You and they, dear madam, are debtors to the king for this blessing. I have done nothing more than solicit his bounty, wishing that I might prove the channel through which it should flow. Accidentally hearing of your application, I determined to support it with my little interest; and, if possible, procure more than you solicited. You owe this interference to my knowledge of your husband's merit, as I was convinced how much he had instructed his inferior officers, and been of benefit to his companions in arms above him. Upon this account I did not think it reasonable that he should be compelled to endure the fatigues of a foreign campaign, when his infirmity made service

painful to him. And further, in order to show how heartily I felt interested in this affair, I with pleasure took advantage of our march so near his habitation, myself to bring down the news of his success, to gladden the hearts of his wife and children.

[He holds out his hand to Captain Harlow, who clasps it with transport.

Capt. H. I can scarcely realize that I have met with such a generous friend, who, of his own accord, has seconded an application which the affection of a beloved wife was making for me, without my knowledge! No one, with less benevolence than your lordship, could have so heartily endeavored to promote the happiness of an afflicted family.

Mrs. H. Then, too, you have made such princely presents to our children!

Cec. I am now ashamed that I took this ring. I did not think it was of so much value.

Lord C. I must own it is very pretty, but much more so on your charming hand. It is indeed so altered, I no longer know it.

Hel. Neither would you, I suppose, sir, your etui; and therefore I'll not speak a word about it.

Ber. As for me, I give you back your song. It is not what you meant to let me have.

Lord C. Then be it a mistake; and, since I have already made it, pardon me; to which I hope your good father will add another favor;

that his Bertram be made an ensign. I'll give order for it, if he chooses I should.

Capt. H. If I choose, my lord! You are the guardian-angel sent to succour us!

Ber. But is it in your own regiment?

Lord C. Yes, my little friend.

Ber. O how rejoiced I am! I'll go this moment with you, and the name of my father shall not quickly be forgotten in the army.

Capt. H. You have conferred many favors on me! Would you not favor me with one more?

Lord C. I apprehend your meaning; and, so far from not consenting, beg you to accept it, namely, a bed in your house for one night for my companion and myself. [*Captain and Mrs. Harlow bow respectfully.*] Provided Helen pleases!

Hel. O, since father is to remain among us, stay as long as you please.

Cec. I may hope, my lord, that now you will consent to eat a few more strawberries?

Lord C. You have made them as much the sweeter to us, as I thought your arrival would have made them bitter.

Ber. Yes, my lord, come in, and honor my father by eating with us; and, in future, I will do whatever I am able, to deserve a second honor like it—in your lordship's tent.

MAN IS BEST AS HE IS.

Mr. Howell, having in his hand a stuffed dead parrot, comes in, ascends a chair, and ties it to a cord, suspended from the ceiling.

Mr. H.

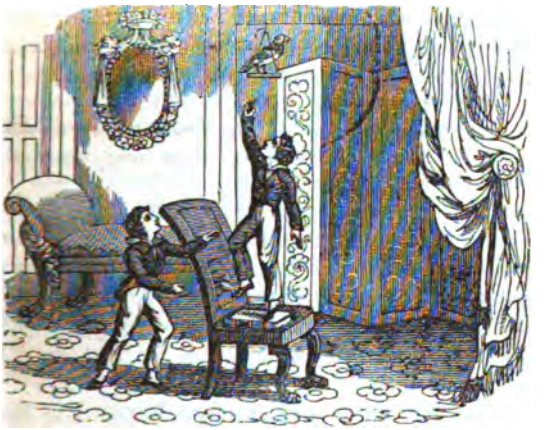
FANCY that unlucky Rowland will not reach it at this height. I can scarcely keep any thing from such a meddling boy. [*He puts the chair in its place again, and goes out.*]

Rowl. [*entering a moment after.*] Where, in the name of goodness, can father have poked our poor dead parrot? I observed it in his hand, when he first came into the room; but saw him afterwards go out without it. [*He looks round the apartment; and at last espies the parrot hanging from the ceiling.*] Ah ha! there he is!

[He takes a run, and jumps with all his might, but wants three feet, or more, to reach the parrot.]

If I were but as active as our greyhound.

[He pulls a chair into the middle of the room, and, mounting upon it, is yet too short; he stands on tiptoe, and jumps, but all without effect. He instantly comes down, and runs for a folio volume, lettered 'Plutarch,' which he puts on the chair, mounts on it, and holds out his hands.]



Shall I never reach the mark? I want sadly to find out how Nicholas has stuffed it. Let me take one more jump.

[He bends his knees to spring, when Vincent entering catches him at work, and hums the following words.

Vin. 'Well leap'd, in good truth!' But don't let me disturb you; for, however active you may be, you'll need a thousand ups and downs before you reach it. Such a bit of manhood jump so high! Come down. Let me get up. I think I shall not want your Plutarch.

[He pulls Rowland by the jacket till he comes down, then gets up in his stead, and, lifting both hands is still a great way from the parrot.]

Row. [*bursting into a laugh.*] Ha! ha! ha! ha! good Mr. 'Bit-of-manhood!' By the manner of your speaking, any one would have certainly fancied you as tall as——as, at least, the monument.

Vin. But, if I step upon the book.

[He stands upon it, is a little nearer, but not near enough to touch the parrot. Rowland jumps about and laughs incessantly.]

'Tis not my fault, but your Plutarch's, which though thick enough to read in, is not so to make a footstool. Only think, if there had only been a few more clever fellows in antiquity, the parrot would have certainly been mine.

Row. Or rather mine; for, in that case, I should have got it first.

Vin. Not that I care about it.

Row. No indeed, not more than Reynard, in the fable, cared about the grapes; possibly the parrot's too green!—hey, brother?

Vin. What's the use of taking it down? I can see it very well from this distance.

Row. [*bantering Vincent.*] Yes, it is a charming point of view! But, hark ye, Vincent, I don't think there so much difference between our heights at last, though you are three years older.

Vin. [*aside.*] How vain the little creature is! [*Aloud.*] Perhaps you'd like to measure with me?

Row. Yes, with all my heart.

[They come together, back to back, and make the most of their respective heights; but Rowland slands tiptoe. Vincent is astonished that he is so tall, till, looking down, he perceives the cause.]

Vin. Ah, slyboots! is it even so? Yes, indeed; I grant you, if you're at those tricks. Come, pu. down your heels.

Row. [*then appearing greatly shorter than his brother.*] It is a plaguey thing to be so short!

Mr.H. [*coming in.*] Because you can't reach Poll? You mean so, don't you, Rowland?

Row. You've been watching us then, father?

Mr.H. No; but don't you see your feet have left it written on my Plutarch?

Vin. Had we been as tall as you, we should then have been able to see Poll a great deal nearer.

Mr.H. Yes; and plagued him after he was dead as much as you did while he lived. And yet you're tall enough for any sort of mischief.

Vin. O, father, what pleasure we should have if we were both as tall as you!

Mr.H. I know you well enough; you would not, even in that case, be content.

Vin. 'Tis true, I would rather be as tall as —— what d'ye call him, the giant, who came down to show himself for money, at the fair?

Row. Aye, Hurlothrumbo; but at present, as we are wishing, and as wishes cost nothing, we need hardly stop. You recollect our tallest cherry-tree. Well, I'd be as tall as that; as tall as—tall as Gulliver of Lilliput.

Mr.H. And why?

Row. Because I should want neither ladder nor pole when the fruit is ripe. Do but think a little, brother; how delightful it would be, to walk about

the orchard, with our head among the branches of the trees, and browse on cherries, pears, and apples, and gather them as we do currants from the bush; would not this be charming entertainment?

Vin. One might likewise walk along the streets, and look into the rooms on either side of the way, three stories high. Ha! ha! I fancy we should put the people in a fright!

Row. I should not fear the carriages when I had occasion to cross the street. It would be only necessary to straddle. Look you—thus: [*he strides*] and I should see carts, wagons, men, horses, and rail-road trains, all pass under me, and should smile in derision of their littleness.

Vin. You know the river that goes by our house in town? We must now take a boat to cross it, or go over one of the bridges. Well, I might walk through it, which would be refreshing in summer.

Row. And, besides this, you know, we should be stronger, if we were bigger. Should a bull venture to attack me, I'd twist off his neck, just as if he were a rabbit; or else chuck him up two hundred yards or more in the air, while he should be so occupied about his falling, that, when down, he would entirely forget to get up and run away.

Vin. We should not then need horses for the plough, as we might draw it ourselves; and in ten steps get quite across a very spacious field. I saw, last Thursday, more than fifty men at work in driving piles to make a causeway. And how hard they worked! Well, with only such a hammer as

my size would let me raise, I might, in a single day, despatch their work, and not be half so tired at night.

Mr. H. Fine talking this; but do you know that, after all your *would be's*, you are two blockheads?

Vin. How, father, two blockheads?

Mr. H. Yes, to think you would be happier than at present, were you bigger.

Vin. But, father, if we were able to do a great deal more than we do at present?

Row. For example: would it not be quite convenient, if we could reach things very high, and take a deal of ground at a step in travelling?

Mr. H. Before I answer, inform me if, in becoming so very tall, you would have every thing else remain as little as it was before your alteration?

Row. Certainly, father.

Vin. Yes! there should be only we three giants.

Mr. H. Thank you; for my part, I'm contented with my size, and wish not to change it.

Row. Yet I think we ought not to be near so big as you; for, otherwise, it would be the children's part to whip their father.

Mr. H. It is a happy circumstance for me, that I shall not, in a hurry, be exposed to so much shame and danger.

Row. O, I would spare you, recollecting how often you have shown me favor.

Vin. [*to Mr. H.*] Then you don't wish to be bigger?

Mr. H. No, indeed; but let us now speak for you and your brother only; and observe what would result from being bigger. In the first place then

Rowland, if, as you just now wished, you were as that cherry-tree, how would you be able, as at present, to go out and take your walk among so many trees as fill our orchard? You would consequently be obliged to crawl upon all-fours, and even then, find it very difficult to proceed.

Row. But you forget, father, how easily I might put my foot against the first tree standing in my way and root it up. It would be a mere wheat-stalk to me.

Mr. H. Thereby you would pursue a very prudent plan! and, in proportion as you wanted much more fruit to satisfy your increased appetite, you'd destroy the trees that bear it! But let's go a little farther than our orchard. There are many roads about us, shaded by rows of trees, whose branches overhang the pathway. Well, men of common height can walk beneath these branches at their ease, and find the shade quite comfortable in the heat of summer, particularly at noon-day; but you would be obliged to walk in the middle of the road, without shade. And what would become of you, when you should have to make your way through a forest? What a furious overthrow of trees would you make before you could clear yourself a path!

Row. I should be no more fatigued than now to make a hole sufficient for my passage thro' a hedge.

Vin. I would uproot the tallest oaks, like that same mad Grecian, mentioned in my English Sophocles.

Mr. H. I should pity those condemned to live near you. But, with such long legs as you would have, you would take it into your head, no doubt, to travel!

Row. Travel? Why, father, I'd go from one end of the world to the other.

Mr. H. Like enough! And without halting, I suppose! For where, please to tell me, would you find a house, a chamber, or a bed, half big enough for your enormous stature? You would certainly be forced to lie all night abroad upon a haystack. That would be quite charming! Don't you think so?

Row. I should find myself as badly off as poor Gulliver at Lilliput.

Vin. Aye; you have not, I can see, brother, made your giant system quite perfect. No; you must have the rest of mankind as big as yourself.

Mr. H. That plan is more generous, I must own. But, in that case, would the ground suffice to feed so many monstrous giants? In a parish, which at present supports five hundred people, twenty of them would not find provisions. In eight and forty hours, each of us would consume an ox, and easily drink a butt or puncheon of milk at breakfast.

Vin. O, I would have the oxen bigger likewise.

Mr. H. And how many of such oxen might be put to graze in a common field?

Vin. Truly, only a very few indeed.

Mr. H. I perceive then, that, for want of pasture, we should soon want cattle.

Vin. Well then, there's only one thing more to order, and the matter's settled. We must have the world grow bigger.

Mr. H. Nothing puzzles you, I see. To be a few yards taller, you would at a minute's notice, stretch

all nature. It is a great thought indeed; and yet, I fancy, you'd be far from finding any capital advantage, after every thing was settled as you wished.

Vin. And why not, dear father?

Mr. H. Can you tell me what proportion means?

Vin. Proportion? No.

Mr. H. Then stand here by your brother. Right. Now which is tallest, you or Rowland?

Vin. You can see yourself, father; he does not reach my ear.

Mr. H. Now stand by me. Which is shortest?

Vin. I am, unfortunately.

Mr. H. It seems then, Vincent, that you are both big and little?

Vin. No, father: I beg your pardon; I'm neither big nor little, to speak properly. I'm big respecting Rowland; but I'm little with respect to you.

Mr. H. And if we were to grow, all three of us, ten times taller, would you be less respecting me, or bigger in respect to Rowland, than at present?

Vin. No, father; for there would always be an equal difference.

Mr. H. Then that is what proportion means. It is regular gradation.

Vin. I understand you now.

Mr. H. In that case, let us return to your idea. If, in nature, every thing became bigger, still preserving its present proportion, you would still be exactly at the point where you first set out. You would not then be able to frighten people in their garrets, by just looking at them through the win-

low ; you would find it no less difficult to wade across the water, or drive piles without assistance, than at present ; and be equally unable to twist off, as you expressed it, a bull's neck, or send him up two hundred yards into the air ; he would be still as much bigger than yourself as he now is.

Vin. Yes ; I see he would.

Mr. H. Have you heard us, Rowland ?

Row. Yes, father.

Mr. H. And now know the meaning of proportion ?

Row. You shall see. Proportion is when any thing grows larger, and another does the same.

Mr. H. But can you give me an example ?

Row. [*after thinking a little while.*] I believe I can ; thus : It would be vain for me to tell my brother boastingly that, when three years have elapsed, I should be three years older than he ; for he still would be oldest, because he also would be three years older than he is at present.

Mr. H. And would the carriages then pass between your legs ?

Row. No, certainly ; I should be still obliged to keep upon the side-walks, if I would not have them throw me down.

Mr. H. And what advantage, Vincent, would you then derive from such a general change of nature as your pride would introduce ?

Vin. I don't see any.

Mr. H. Your wishes then are absurd, since their accomplishment cannot make you more happy.

Vin. You are right, father. It would have been better if we had wished to be little; yes, quite little.

Row. What, as little as Gulliver's Lilliputians?

Vin. Why not?

Mr.H. Ha, ha! another strange conceit! What can be your motives for this wish?

Vin. Because, among other good consequences, one would never fear a famine; since a very little wheat—a handful only—would make bread enough to serve a man for four and twenty hours.

Mr.H. Why, yes, there might be some savings!

Vin. Besides which, we should not then have cause to go to war with one another; as a place, no bigger than our garden, would be large enough for a mighty city. Men therefore, having more room than was needed, would never go to war with one another, as I have heard you say they do, for obtaining an inch or two of land.

Mr.H. I won't answer for them on that point, acquainted as I am with human folly; but I will not disturb so charming an arrangement with my fears; and am contented therefore to suppose I see both peace and plenty flourishing, and the golden age, as you have read in Ovid, thanks to your good management, brought back again among us!

Vin. But that's not all. My tutor tells me, that little creatures are a deal more delicate and perfect in themselves than great ones; have a much more piercing sight, a finer sense of hearing; and in perception of smell are much superior. Is it true, father?

Mr.H. In general it is.

Vin. Thus, if we were a great deal less than at present, we should see, and hear, and smell many things, of which we now have no knowledge.

Mr. H. These advantages, it is true, would be very precious; yet I own I should be sorry to renounce, for such advantages, the universal empire we now exercise on every thing that breathes.

Vin. There would be no occasion to renounce it; for remember, as you have often told me, man bears rule much more by his understanding, than by mere strength of body.

Mr. H. True; because his strength of body is exactly proportioned to his understanding. But bestow upon a Lilliputian's frame the greatest and sublimest genius—give him even our inventions and our arts, advanced to that perfection they possess among us; do you think he would be able to employ our instruments, and manage properly the meanest of our numberless machines or engines? How would he defend himself against wild beasts, when even the dog he keeps within his dwelling would, without designing any mischief, crush him under foot?

Vin. But what if every thing becomes proportionably little? There, father, I think the argument is in my favor.

Mr. H. Only to confound yourself; for, granting this proportionality of littleness, men immediately lose all the advantage you would give them. Their lilliputian harvests would not keep them from the fear of famine; and their wars, while they continued equally frequent and ferocious as at present,

would be more ridiculous. The inferior animal might have finer organs, and more delicate sensations; and perhaps too, with his littleness, which could not but be laughed at, he would take upon him, as you do, to alter and reform the universe.

Vin. I think, father, you're much too hard upon us; we can't arrange any thing to please you.

Row. For this reason, brother, because you know nothing about the matter. There is but one way, and that is, to order things as they should be.

Mr. H. Bravo! so you take the man of consequence, and reformation of God's works upon you?

Row. Yes, as well as Vincent.

Mr. H. Well then, let me know how you would settle the affair? your system must be very curious, I suppose.

Row. Why, father, we only want one thing. We want to have a harder body, one as hard as iron.

Mr. H. And why so?

Row. You see the splinter here in my little finger. It seems nothing; yet you can't imagine how much pain it gives me.

Mr. H. My poor little man! I'm sorry for it.

Row. And the wound I gave my head about a month ago, by tumbling down stairs. It is not yet well; feel here, father; there; that's the place.

Mr. H. I see the scar.

Row. What pleasure would it be to play with Pompey, and not fear the rogue would bite me. Besides, when I am old enough to be a soldier and go to battle, I should laugh at balls and bullets. Nay,

my head would blunt the broadest sword that struck it; would not that be vastly pretty?

Mr. H. It would, indeed.

Row. In that case we should want for nothing; we should be quite perfect; shouldn't we, father?

Mr. H. [*taking an orange from his pocket.*] See here, my little fellow! smell this orange.

Row. O how fine! It must be very good to eat. Do you design to give it to me, for having settled matters better than my brother?

Mr. H. No; it is not for you.

Vin. For me then?

Mr. H. Nor for you. I mean it for a certain—I don't know if I should say, a certain person; but, however that be, one more perfect than you are.

Vin. And who is that, father?

Mr. H. You will wonder, very likely, when I tell you who:—that negro figure on my chimney-piece.

Row. You joke, father! why, he can neither see, nor eat, nor smell.

Mr. H. And yet he is made of iron.

Row. And that's the very reason why he cannot.

Mr. H. You would certainly have sacrificed the satisfaction that results from seeing, smelling, and eating, to the boast that you could never break your head by falling from my chimney-piece; for, were you made of iron, as you wished, you would be only fit to stand there with my other bronzes.

Row. O, I don't mean so, father; I would be living while I had this iron body.

Mr. H. And how then could it be animated by

that blood, and those juices that keep up our life? By what means could its nerves be flexible, and have that sensibility which makes us so expert or ready in the use of every limb, and renders the enjoyment of our senses so delightful!

Row. O, dear me! I see my scheme is hardly better than my brother's.

Vin. But, father, since you're so clever in destroying our thoughtless plans, it is your turn to provide us with better in their stead.

Mr. H. And why should I provide a plan? I am fully satisfied with that which God's providence has already established. Yes, dear children, I am sensible that we are completely furnished with whatever can promote our happiness. Superior in our conformation to all other animals, by virtue of our genius we tame or control the small number of those who surpass us in strength. If we have not the rapidity of stags and horses, we can manufacture a composition which will overtake the one while he is running from us, and we can mount the other to direct him whither we think proper. We have not the wings of a bird, yet we can give wings to tall trees that grow in forests; and these inanimate things when moulded into masts and paddles, put on shipboard, and impelled by wind or steam power, visit the remotest regions. Our sight, less piercing than an insct's, is not bounded to the narrow space in which we move about, but can take in an ample horizon, and contemplate the great miracles of nature. We are unable to gaze,

like an eagle, at the sun; but we have invented an instrument which seems to draw us nearer to that luminary, so that we may measure his immensity of distance, and observe the place that he possesses in the midst of an infinity of stars, obscured by his superior brightness. All our other senses contribute likewise to procure us a succession of enjoyments, and to promote or ensure our safety. Conscious of our genius, we are every day in search of new discoveries; we disarm the thunder, or tell it where to fall; we make one element counteract another; we oppose the beneficial warmth of fire to the inclemency of frost; and keep the land from being overflowed by inundations of the sea. Sometimes we descend into the darkest bowels of the earth, and bring out those precious metals which we purify; and, if needed, by an ingenious process of mixing them together, form new substances. And sometimes we mark out granite rocks that overhang and seem ready to fall upon our heads, precipitate them from the height into the vallies, and soon after compel them to reascend in sumptuous edifices, or in stately pyramids that pile their summits in the clouds. The society, which we form with our fellow creatures for the supply of our mutual wants, obtains for us, in return for our own toil, the labor of ten thousand hands, all eager to procure us the conveniences of life. Upon whatever side we turn, we have at our command the various products of the universe, all brought together for our use. The sciences exalt

our souls, and charm our faculties. The arts, by having introduced such numberless machines, assist us in our labor, or refresh us when we seek repose. Memory and reflection both give us the advantages acquired or enjoyed by all who have preceded us. Together with the pleasing idea of our own personal existence, we derive happiness from others; by the virtues of compassion and beneficence; and by the connexions of kindred and friendship. Our happiness however depends upon ourselves alone, amid the host of human creatures who surround us; sure of obtaining it, if we only moderately use our strength, and make a constant application of our reason to the business of determining our conduct. So that, if our happiness be interrupted by our own imprudence or rashness, it is owing to our own folly. We then seem to be children, like yourselves, who, instead of gratefully enjoying the conveniences and comforts of our situation, and courageously enduring its few evils, vex ourselves with wishes for ideal blessings, or disgrace our nature with a lack of manly courage. Man is best as he is.

Vin. Well, father, upon the whole, your plan is best, and must be right.

Row. Yes, I think so too; otherwise that parrot, which I tried so hard to reach, had he been as large in proportion as I wanted to be, would have been a monstrous bird to stuff and hang up in a room.

THE SCHOOL FOR STEPMOTHERS.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. AND MRS. FLOYD.	CHARLES,
FRANCIS,	PERCIVAL,
FREDERICA,	*Mrs. Floyd's Children.*
ANNE,	DANIEL, *a Servant.*
Mr. Floyd's Children.	

The SCENE *is in Mr. Floyd's Garden.*

SCENE I.

Francis, alone.

ONCE more I am in my garden, where I have not been these six months! What a pleasure every object gives me! Here is the little summer house, where I used to breakfast so frequently with my dear mother. If she were still living, what happiness for both of us! She would receive me with open arms; and I should have many little things to tell her. Alas! [*beginning to cry*] I have forever lost her; and, if we are still to love each other, we can only do so in another world. My dear mother,

could you only hear me, it would be some comfort, since you cannot come back to see your Frank. Instead of you, I indeed have a mother; but a mother, as they call it, in law; and that, as we are told, is just as much as if one said, a cruel mother. What then am I to do? I shall not dare to look upon her. O, if I might at least have lived with grandmother! But it cannot be; father will have me here, although poor mother is dead. Alas, I shall never be able to live here; I know it. I will therefore only see my dear father and sisters, and go back. Yes; I must and will return.

Enter Daniel.

Dan. What, master Francis? is it you, come back again? How goes it with you?

Fran. In health not much amiss, dear Daniel. And pray how are you?

Dan. Quite well; not a penny for the apothecary from me! My draughts are made at the *George*. But what is the matter? I see you have been crying.

Fran. [*wiping his eyes.*] Crying?

Dan. Yes, crying! O you cannot conceal it. Have you met with any accident?

Fran. None, since I left my grandmother's.

Dan. O, I understand; you weep for your mother; but then you have another.

Fran. A stepmother you mean? If I could only shun her! But how fare my poor dear sisters?

Dan. How? ah! bad enough. At six they must be up. I would not advise them to lie a minute after. They would pay dear for their drowsiness.

Fran. But what have they to do so early ?

Dan. Their mother knows where to find them work ! She rules us all like slaves ! and I myself must get up with the rest ! I rose at seven this morning ; and, early as it was, saw both your sisters hard at work in the parlor.

Fran. But I ask you, at what ?

Dan. Working for their young brothers-in-law.

Fran. Yes, I am told that second mothers never spare their husbands' children, while they favor their own ; and I imagine, I must go to work too. But what has become of all my pinks and tulips ?

Dan. O, they are all taken away !

Fran. By whom ?

Dan. By Charles and his brother.

Fran. So I have lost all my pretty flowers ; and those two wicked little fellows have destroyed them. They have nothing now to do but to take the garden from me likewise. Look, here they come.

Enter Charles and Percival.

Cha. [*whispering Percival.*] Who is that young master with Daniel ? If it were but Francis ?

Per. [*whispering to Daniel.*] Is it he ?

Dan. [*answering drily.*] Yes, gentlemen.

Cha. O, my dear brother, welcome ! We have wished to see you !

Fran. [*shrinking back.*] Have we been acquainted with each other long enough, that you should thus embrace me ?

Cha. We are not acquainted with you I ac knowledge, but we all are three brothers.

Fran. Yes, half brothers, sir.

Cha. Why half? If your father loves our mother, and she loves him, why should not we love one another? They are man and wife, and we are therefore brothers.

Fran. If we are brothers, have you a greater right here than I have?

Per. [*aside.*] How quarrelsome he is!

Cha. Your father has let us work these three weeks in this garden.

Fran. I was in it first, and surely you will not drive me out?

Per. Come, Charles; let us be gone, and leave him in his peevish humor.

Cha. No, no, Percival; we must stay, and be good friends with each other.

Per. Do you like the sulky fellow so much?

Fran. The sulky fellow! do you call me sulky?

Per. Yes, and envious, and——

Fran. You dare insult me then? and even in my garden here?

Per. You began; but I'm your match! mind that.

Cha. Hear me, Percival! Would you strike your brother? Come along, and let us not vex our new father; and more particularly so on the very day when he is to see his son. [*he draws him away.*]

Per. Well, I will go and tell mother. [*Exit.*

Fran. My anxieties are now beginning. They will tell their mother I have insulted them, and she will incense father against me. Unhappy that I am; do you not think, Daniel, I am to be pitied?

Dan. Indeed you are ; take heart, however. I will be your friend ; and we shall then, I think, be able to make head against them.

Fran. Yes ; but my father ?

Dan. Let me alone with him. I know a thousand tricks of these new comers, which I will tell him about. They have spoilt your garden, killed your flowers, and called you names. I warrant you they will be badly off.

Fran. So then, my good Daniel, you will stand up for me ?

Dan. Ay, as sure as my name is Daniel.

Fran. Thank you ! thank you ! I am not without a friend I see, though I have lost mother. Did you notice what handsome clothes they wore ? Who worked them ? can you tell ?

Dan. Their mother.

Fran. Yes, I was thinking so. She will always be employed upon her favorites ; but pray who will ornament such clothes for me ?

Dan. Why, if you want such, you must work them yourself.

Fran. Had they not new jackets likewise ?

Dan. Yes ; they were given them as a present from your father on the day of his marriage.

Fran. O, he did not make me such a present. I was sent with these old clothes into the country. It is too much ! I cannot support the thought ! My poor mother is dead, and my farther forgets me ! You only are left to befriend me !

Dan. Be comforted ! matters may turn out better

than you think; but, in the first place, you must see your new mother. So follow me, and put on a cheerful face as if you were rejoiced to see her.

Fran. That I cannot do.

Dan. But you *must*, however it may go against your feelings. I do so, although I detest her. Would you think it? she begins to tell me that I must be less frequent in my visits to the alehouse; I that was accustomed to spend half the day there, in the lifetime of my last dear mistress! She indeed was quite a lady. Things are marvellously altered now, and we must alter with them. Patience! when we are alone, I will tell you what more is to be done. At present follow me.

Fra. Will she see by my eyes I have been crying?

Dan. Why, you are crying still.

Fran. Then I will not go now; she will ask the reason of my tears. What answer should I give her?

Dan. You might say, that, coming home, and thinking of your dear mother, you fell a crying.

Fran. But, provided she spoke about my quarrel with her children?

Dan. Tell her, that they began it; and call me to witness what you say. But here she comes. Go and salute her boldly.

Enter Mrs. Floyd.

Mrs. F. Where is he? Is it you, my dearest Francis? Then I have all my family together at last. [*She embraces him with tenderness.*] How sweet a countenance! and how happy am I, that I can call so amiable a child my son!

Fran. I should be happy too, if I could rejoice ; and yet——[*sighing.*]

Mrs. F. What is the matter, my dear ? You seem quite sad, my charming little man ! [*Francis cries afresh, and cannot speak.*] You turn away and cry. What causes these tears ? Won't you inform me what afflicts you ?

Fran. Nothing.

Fran. It is enough, however, to distress me. Say what gives you all this sorrow, and I will comfort you, if possible. If your father or sisters were to see you, they might fancy that you met with some misfortune in coming home ; and they are

pleased in thinking that they are so soon to see you. Would it grieve you to embrace them?

Fra. Believe me, I can have no greater pleasure! But shall I embrace mother? It is for her that I cry.

Mrs.F. She died nine months ago; and do you still weep for her?

Fran. Yes; all my life! O, my dear mother!

Mrs.F. Be calm, my little dear! Endeavor to divert your thoughts, and let us speak of her no longer, since it gives you so much sorrow.

Fran. No; on the contrary, let me be always speaking of her, if you mean that I should feel any comfort. Would you have your children so soon forget you after you were dead?

Mrs. F. Dear little fellow! [*embracing him.*] You loved her very much?

Fran. I find so; much more now than when she lived. She was so good!

Mrs.F. I wish I were only able to restore her to you; this I cannot do, and therefore I will take her place, poor little fellow, in your bosom. I will love you as she did; and be a mother to you.

Fra. But it never can be you that bore me, nursed me, and brought me up. She was my real mother, and you only my step-mother.

Mrs. F. But why give me such a name? I have not called you my step-son.

Fran. Pray pardon me! I said it not to displease you. I begin to think you very kind; at least you seem so. But then you have children of your own, and must, of course, love them much more than me.

Mrs. F. You shall not find it so. Some few days hence we shall be better acquainted than we can be now, and you shall see if my affection will not make you think yourself my son.

Fra. If it could be without forgetting my mother—

Mrs. F. I would not wish you to forget her; on the contrary, we will speak often of her, and your tenderness shall be a pattern for my children. Come, I long to introduce you to them.

Fran. O, I have seen them already. Have they not complained of my behavior?

Mrs. F. No, my little man. Have you had any quarrel? I should be very sorry for that, as all my wish is to behold you tenderly united to each other, like real brothers.

Fran. I wish nothing more. But where is my father and my sisters? Let me see them.

Mrs. F. Your father will soon be here. He went this morning to despatch some business out of doors, that he might have the afternoon to himself; in the mean time, I will take you to your sisters, who will tell you what you are to think of me.

Fran. I wish them to speak of you, but not first. I have a deal to say of my mother. [*As they go out, Charles and Percival enter on the opposite side.*]

Scene II. *Charles, Percival.*

Per. Why did you stop me from complaining to mother? I keep company with that little snarler! No, never. When his father comes home, I will

tell him what a waspish son he has, in order that he may teach him to behave a little better.

Cha. Do you think then that father will not be vexed, when told of this difference between you? and would it please you to afflict him?

Per. Certainly I should be sorry for it. Yet what can I do? if this little gentleman is not corrected for his rudeness the first day of coming home, there will be nothing but disputes hereafter. He will be always affronting us. I am not very deliberate in such cases; I shall certainly be warm, and tell him what he ought to know; and if hereafter he should take airs upon him, as just now——

Cha. I hope, Percival, you would not beat him!

Per. But you do not suppose that I will let myself be beat by him!

Cha. No, certainly.

Per. Then what ought I to do?

Cha. To-morrow, very likely, we shall see; but now it would be improper to disturb his father's satisfaction in seeing him.

Per. Be it now, to-morrow, or the next day, it is all the same to Percival; but the sooner, in my opinion, the better.

Cha. Brother, I beseech you, wait a little longer. Francis cannot be so sulky as you suppose.

Per. And yet, sure, I know him as well as you.

Cha. His father and his sisters say he is very condescending and good-natured.

Per. Yes, indeed, he showed his condescension

and good-nature, when he turned his back upon me in reply to my civility.

Cha. That was not well; but then he does not know us yet.

Per. He might have tried to know us.

Cha. How you talk! perhaps he was grieved.

Per. And are we to suffer for it?

Cha. No; but brothers must pass over many things which others have a right to take amiss.

Per. It appears to me that he scorns to look on us as brothers.

Cha. No; I cannot persuade myself of that.

Per. Well, let him beware. I shall not put up with any insult from him. But he's coming here with his sisters; I will withdraw. I cannot bear to think of such a snappish gentleman.

Cha. Let us stay and share in their amusement.

Per. I might possibly disturb them, and will go.

Cha. If you are resolved, I will follow you.—[*Aside.*] I must do all in my power to soften him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Francis, Priscilla, Anne.*

Pris. [*holding Francis by the hand.*] But why afflict yourself, dear brother? Our affliction cannot bring mother to life again.

Fran. But will you promise me, at least, that we will think a little of her every time we meet?

Pris. Yes, brother, I shall always think I see her with us, just as when she was alive.

Fran. [*looking affectionately at them.*] My dear sisters! this doubles the delight I have in seeing you.

Pris. Anne and I have been wishing, this long while, to see you.

Anne. And so have I, brother; for now we can play all together as we used to do. Charles and his brother can play with us too. O, how fine that will be! [*jumping for joy.*]

Fran. Pshaw! no more about your Charles and his brother, if you love me.

Pris. How!

Fran. They would but interrupt our pastime; they are good for nothing but to carry complaints about us to their mother, and convey away our things.

Pris. Can you think so badly of them, brother?

Anne. Look here, Frank? [*showing a work-box.*]

Fran. And who gave you that?

Anne. Why, Percival; he went out and bought it for me, with a crown that his mother gave him.

Pris. See too this morocco pocket-book. It was a present made to Charles; and he gave it me.

Fran. Ay, ay! I see you understand each other's meaning, and will all four of you be against me.

Pris. and Anne. Be against you!

Fran. Certainly. I know they hate me, having taken all my flowers away, and spoilt my garden.

Pris. Who has taken all your flowers away, and spoilt your garden?

Fran. Those two little fellows whom you seem to admire so much.

Pris. We do not understand you. Have you seen your garden?

Fran. Have I seen it? What a question! Only look yourself. Where are my pinks and tulips?

Pris. Where? you have not then been at the terrace, under my mother's bow window?

Fran. Is there any garden there?

Anne. Ay, surely; and a very pretty one.

Pris. Your garden here was far too little: so mother had one marked out for all of us, behind the terrace, six times larger.

Fran. And who owns it? Doubtless your two favorites!

Pri. No; it belongs to all of us, each has a portion.

Anne. I, as well as the rest.

Fran. And is there one for me?

Pris. Undoubtedly; and you are luckier than we. You have not taken any labor in the cultivation of your part, which, notwithstanding, you will find quite full of flowers.

Anne. Red, yellow, blue, and white, you will see.

Fran. Who set them for me?

Anne. Your brothers. They have been a month about it, employing all their leisure hours upon the work. They have selected all the flowers that *their* beds supplied, and put them into yours, that, at the time of your return, you might be more surprised.

Fran. And have they done all this for me? Daniel told me that they had taken all my flowers away, but did not tell me why.

Pris. If you give ear to Daniel, you will be worse off for it. He wished to make us quarrel with our brothers. How ungrateful! Their mother

consents to have him stay for no other reason than because our mother begged father upon her death-bed, not to turn him off; and all his study is, to make her children unhappy.

Anne. And all because mother wishes to have him work, instead of spending half the day with idle fellows at the alehouse.

Fran. Is it so? Then I begin to see that he wanted to deceive me, when he promised to be my friend.

Pris. However, we must not say any thing about it to father; he would dismiss him; we must therefore carefully keep silence, and not ruin Daniel.

Fran. O no, indeed! since poor mother had such a value for him.

Pris. You will soon see whether he told you truth.

Anne. But come now, and look at your garden.

Fran. Yes, with all my heart; I long to see it.

[Anne and Priscilla take him by the hand, and go out on one side, without perceiving Charles, who comes in with Percival on the other side.]

Scene IV. *Charles, Percival.*

They enter with two plates of cake and fruit, which they place upon the table in the summer-house.

Cha. Where is he?

Per. [*looking every way.*] Look, there he is—There, brother, with his sisters, going to our garden.

Cha. I am glad of that; for only think what pleasure he will have when he discerns how busy we have been to ornament his portion of it!

Per. Do you think so? For my part, I think he

will find fault with every thing about him, he is so queer! The flowers, he will say, are badly chosen, or the box not planted as it should be, or the ground too moist, or too dry, and twenty other things.

Cha. Yes; but do you know that I am beginning to consider you as touchy as you think him? I never saw you so before.

Per. It is he that caused it. Have his sisters ever had occasion to complain of my behavior? And I only wish to live upon good terms with him. You know with what impatience I expected his arrival here, and how I ran with open arms to meet him.

Cha. True; but, as I said before, it is very likely something grieves him. He is afraid perhaps that his father will no longer love him, or our mother show *him* less affection than he fancies she does us. If so, then surely it is our duty to make much of him in his uneasiness, and win him to be friends with us, by every gentle method in our power.

Per. You are in the right; I did not think of that.

Cha. If he be as good as every body says, think, brother, how a little kindness on our part will, in the end, affect him; how his father will be fonder of us for it; and what pleasure we shall give mother!

Per. I was in the wrong, I own; let him come, and I will be so attentive to him, he must unavoidably forget the past.

Cha. What hinders us from running to him where he is? The flowers, that we planted for him, will make peace between us.

Per. That is well said : we will go immediately. But here he comes himself.

Cha. And see how pleased he seems !

Enter Francis, Priscilla, and Anne.

Fran. [*running to embrace his brothers.*] My dear good friends, my brothers, you must certainly be very much displeased with my behavior.

Cha. We ! why so ?

Per. It is over, my dear Frank, and I love you.

Fran. What a pretty garden you have made me ! You have given me all your finest flowers, without my having done any thing to give you pleasure.

Cha. It is enough for us, if you are pleased with our endeavors.

Fran. If I am ! Forgive me pray, dear brothers. I insulted you : I turned away when you came running to embrace me. I will never do so for the future. We will always be good friends ; and every thing that I have shall be yours as well as mine.

Cha. Yes, and every thing shall be in common to us ; not our pleasures only, but our sorrows also.

Per. Let us then embrace each other, and begin this friendship. [*They embrace.*]

Cha. This is as it should be ; and now, Frank, we must enjoy a little banquet which has been prepared for us by mother ; we have brought it and put it here in the summerhouse, as you may see. Let us enter. Come in, sisters, and sit down with us.

Per. It is your privilege, dear brother, to do the honors of the feast. Mother will have it so ; as you she says, by your arrival, are the founder of it.

Fran. O, I am sure I never could have eaten any where with better appetite, than at this feast of friendship. [*He presents them with the cake and fruit.*]

Per. Well said, and is not this much better than to quarrel with each other?

Anne. I believe so, truly! For what quarrel can be wôrth these pears?

Cha. How glad mother will be to find us such friends!

Pris. She deserves that we should give her all the joy possible. When you come to know her ——But I remember, you have seen her.

Fran. Yes, Priscilla; she received me with the greatest kindness, and has so agreeable a countenance that she cannot be ill-tempered. I perceived even by her tone of voice that I should be easily induced to love her.

Pris. And how good she is to us!

Anne. We need but please ourselves, to give her pleasure.

Pris. We were greatly to be pitied at the death of our mother. Father, who is employed all day in business, could not attend to us. There was forever something wrong in our clothes, and our education was much more neglected.

Anne. We should very probably have fallen into a habit of indolence.

Pris. But since our new mother came, we are both set to rights. She gives us every amusement suited to our age, and is a party with us in our

little pleasures. One would think her much more interested in the preservation of our health, than of her own. She makes such provision beforehand for our wants, that I have not yet had sufficient time to remark that I needed any thing!

Anne. Lately I was ill; O, very ill indeed; and it was she who waited on me. She was always by my bed, and doing every thing to comfort me. She made all manner of nice things; and I believe, I should have died, but for her great attention to me.

Fran. O my dear sisters! is this possible?

Pris. You know too, brother, that, before you left us, we had not been accustomed to employ our needle. Well; mother was kind enough to teach us. So that we now know,—not only plain, but every sort of fine work.

Cha. See here, the collar and wristbands of my shirt. Mother extols the work very much. Well, Priscilla did it all herself, and presented it to me.

Pris. Which you deserved beforehand; for who made me such a garden, or presented me with such fine nosegays? You must know, brother Francis, mother will not have us oblige our brothers, unless they likewise oblige us, and they do more to please us, than we could have thought to ask.

Ann. Yes; and as a proof, I will show you the cork boat which Percival made with his penknife. You shall see its nice silk rigging, satin sails, and ribbon streamers. It swims charmingly in the fish-pond.

Per. Since you made me such a handsome pair of braces——

An. I can make much handsomer things than brasses now. Ah, Frank, if you were to see a certain green and lilach striped silk purse. The green at least is all of my own fancying; ask Priscilla. O, I am sure you will be delighted when you have it.

Fran. How! have you made me a purse?

[Priscilla makes a sign that Anne should be silent.

Anne. [*embarrassed.*] O, Frank, I forgot—[*in a whisper*] yes, it is! but you must know, mother enjoined me not to tell you. And besides, she means to surprise you herself with nothing less than a nice worked waistcoat, such as my brothers have on—O, you will soon see!

Pri. This little giddy creature can keep no secret.

Anne. No, because there was so much pleasure in revealing. We have been always thinking of you, brother.

Fran. O, I thank you; but pray tell me, are you really happy?

Pris. Are we happy? What is wanting in our situation? Our mother is really so good! I do not know how it is, but she has found the secret of converting every thing into a sort of pleasure. I have no amusement half so great as chatting with her. Even while she is jesting she instructs us.

Anne. You should see us, when we are reading certain little tales, which a friend of ours composes for us. He knows what every little boy and girl does in the world; and it would be comical if he were to put us in his book.

Pris. I wish he would put us in it, on account of

our mother; that all the world might know the goodness of her heart, and how we love her.

Cha. Yes, and I too, for the sake of our father, who treats us just as if we were his real children.

Enter Mr. Floyd.

Mr. F. [*who had stood by the side of the summer-house during the whole preceding scene, shows himself suddenly amongst them.*] Yes, and you are so within my heart. I make it my happiness to think that I am your father. But where is Frank?

Fran. [*embracing Mr. Floyd.*] Here, father. O how rejoiced am I to see you, dear father.

Mr. F. Kiss me once more, my dear child. And now let me inquire, if you are pleased with your new brothers?

Fran. O, I never could have chosen better. I will love them, and do every thing in my power that they may love me likewise.

Cha. There will be no difficulty in that matter, since we are determined to love you.

Per. We shall only need to recollect the pleasure we have this day received.

Pris. In order that you may keep your promise I will be sure frequently to remind you of it.

Anne. O, as to that, sister, I am sure I shall remember it without a monitor.

Mr. F. I certainly believe you will do so, from what I have heard you say; for, to tell you a secret, dear children, I was standing here hard by, during your conversation; and I am sure I shall never forget it: nor I alone, but another; for your

mother has heard every thing as well as myself. Come, dear wife, approach, and enjoy a pleasure so congenial with your goodness.

SCENE V. *Mr. and Mrs. Floyd, Francis, Priscilla, Anne, Charles, Percival.*

Mr. F. Here she is, my little ones; the partner that I have chosen to promote your happiness; and not yours only, but my own. The fortune, which it might have been in my power to leave to you, would be nothing, in comparison with that more valuable gift, a good and proper education. We have therefore made these second nuptials to procure you every possible advantage. Three among you needed a mother, who might take upon her the care of your childhood; and the other two, a father to advance them in the world. Your interests were the same, in these second nuptials; and it is for the benefit of all of us that they have been framed. Promise me then, dear wife, as I on my part promise, that you will never think of treating either of these children with the least degree of partiality, except indeed as a reward which any one may merit for superior good behavior.

Mrs. F. My reply to you, dear husband, are these tears; I cannot repress them; and to you my children, these embraces.

[She holds out her arms, and all the children strive with each other to get near her.]

Mr. F. And do you, dear little ones, on your part, promise to keep up a constant union with

each other; to avoid all jealousies and quarrels; and, like children of one parent, love and respect each other.

[The children take each other by the hand, and, kneeling, answer,]

Yes, father; we do, we do.

Mr. F. [*raising them from the ground.*] Continue to live in this state of friendship. You will find its charms constantly increase, and the tie between you grow closer every day. You will be as happy, from the services that you do each other, as from those little sacrifices that may frequently be necessary for the sake of peace among you. Every one, enjoying individual happiness, will not the less enjoy the happiness of his brother or sister; which, in fact, every one may attribute to their own generous concession or forbearance. There will not be a person around you who will not interest himself in your prosperity, if his friendship or good will be worth the acquisition; and your future children will reward you by *their* tenderness, for having so well merited the affection of your parents.

THE POOR OFFICER.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

CAPTAIN BARTON.	LUCRETIA,
MRS. BARTON.	ISABEL, *their Daughters.*
EDWARD,	MASTER OF THE ACADEMY.
PAUL,	EUGENIUS, *his Son.*
THEODORE, *their Sons.*	PIPES, *an old Sergeant.*

SCENE, *an apartment of Captain Barton's House.*

SCENE I.

Paul, Theodore, Lucretia, Isabel, Pipes.

Lucretia and Isabel are employed; the one in reading, and the other at her tambour frame. Theodore has a pencil, and is drawing. Paul shoulders Pipes' crutch.

Pipes to Paul.

MAKE ready!—Present!—Fire!—Come; very well. Another lesson will complete you. Give me back my crutch. [*To Lucretia and Isabel.*] You will not let me teach you then?

Luc. Teach us?

Isa. Young ladies ?

Pipes. And why not ? A soldier's children should all learn their exercise. One never looks so well as with a musket.

Luc. Especially when it is represented by a crutch.

Pipes. True ; but I mistake it frequently myself, miss ; and incline to put it *over* rather than *under* my shoulder. It is, in truth, a sort of instinct in me ; a sort of first motion. Ah, poor Pipes ! to have a crutch, instead of a gun in his hand. Ten years have I carried it about, and am not yet used to it.

Paul. But recollect, Pipes ! at your age you would certainly have been otherwise dismissed.

Pipes. Dismissed! what mean you, master Paul? Had it not been for my wooden leg, I should have died a soldier. Confounded leg! a hundred times a day I find myself disposed to make a bonfire of it! Instead of a fine white spatterdash, when I see nothing but a wooden stump, I hardly know myself, and fall into passion.

Theo. Would you wish to have it otherwise? Why, man, it is nothing but the fortune of war.

Isa. And is it thus that Theodore comforts you! Do not be afflicted, Pipes.

Pipes. You are in the right, my dear miss Isabel; for, after all, it bears me witness I have seen hot service. If my leg had not been in the fire, it would hardly be so dry now. In fact, I know some legs that are in their place, because they carried their owners out of danger; and I would not exchange my wooden leg for twenty such. Young gentlemen, it is happy for you both that you are to serve; but take my counsel, and lose arms as well as legs, rather than get the least spot in your honor for want of courage.

Theo. Yes, I promise you I will.

Paul. And so will I. When I am fighting, I will always think of you.

Pipes. Do, master Paul; and your brave father too. *Barton and Pipes* shall be your charging words. With these two names between your lips, you will always be the first to do your duty.

Enter Captain Barton.

The Children [*seeing Capt. B. run towards him and cry all at once*] Here is father !

Capt.B. [*embracing them.*] Good morning to you all, my dears ! Good-morning to you, Pipes, [*holding out his hand,*] and thank you heartily for your instructions to my children.

Pipes. Ah, sir, my instructions I bestow upon them with a great deal of pleasure when you are not by ; but, seeing you, I am almost sorry.

Capt.B. And why so, my friend ?

Pi. Because I see its fruits, by your example. If I am wise then, shall I study to make soldiers of your children, that they may be dismissed, after they are worn out in the service ?

Capt.B. But why call my bad fortune to remembrance, when I myself have labored to forget it, and complain no longer of what you suppose hard usage?

Pipes. Please your honor then, I will complain for both. Bombs and cannon ! is it not a shame ! What, turn me off for having one leg less ? A soldier is always fit for duty, if his heart and his head are left him. If they think that we cripples make no show at a review, why let them keep us for a battle ; we will be put into a corps apart ; we will not even condescend to mix with others. No affront to your grenadiers nor your light infantry, we will be first of all, I warrant you, sir,

Capt. B. Good old friend ! how much am I pleased to find this fire of youth and courage still burning within you.

Pipes. I am quite vexed to see you smile, who should storm more than I do. I am a vulgar dog; I am nobody; and they may think they ought to overlook me, having lost a limb; but *you*, a captain, who have had wounds in twenty battles, and have such a family of children, to put you on what they call half-pay, and send you off without a pension! who can think of such treatment and be patient!

Capt. B. I find no fault. There are others more unhappy. [*He turns to his children, who seem uneasy.*] My good children, you have done enough to require some recreation this morning. Go, then; but first visit your mother; she is in her chamber.

Children. Yes, father; and afterwards we will come back to study. [*Exeunt.*

Capt. B. My old friend, I am pleased with your affection; but still I do not like that you should speak before my children as you do. I would not have them think themselves authorized to hate their fellow-creatures; such a notion would discourage them in their pursuit of fortune. Remember, they are destined to acquire themselves a reputation by their actions. It is unlikely that they would take pains for such a purpose, if they are told that men merit only their contempt.

Pipes [*ironically.*] Yes; your honor has great reason to defend mankind, they have respected you so much!

Capt. B. There are more good than wicked men about us; and, if there were only you, that thought would reconcile me to humanity!

Pipes [*bowing.*] O, captain!

Capt. B. You have been so willing to attach yourself to my ill fortune! besides, you know, I am indebted to you for the preservation of my life.

Pipes. And, if I saved it, I was under obligation to do no less, my worthy captain, for your sending me so often to the drill. Had it not been for you, Pipes would have turned out a vagabond and drunkard, like many others. It was your kindness that made a man of me; I should have been, my whole life long, a common soldier, had you permitted. I have been promoted from rank to rank, and at last made sergeant; and that is something, every one will grant me! and no inconsiderable lift towards colonel. But a plague upon the musket-ball, say I, that, to my heart of oak, has added this pine leg!

Capt. B. Come, Pipes, now you have repose, and that is always as good as honor.

Pipes. I shall never have repose whilst I see you ill at ease. The produce of your farm, this year, has failed, and I am now a burden to you.

Capt. B. Can a child become a burden to his father? And pray, are you not as one among my children? Thanks to heaven! I shall be always sure of a subsistence. If our ration is a little less, there shall still be an equal share for you, Pipes.

Pipes. And I take it; but have hopes that I shall be able to acknowledge all your favors handsomely, as I have met with an employment.

Capt. B. So much the better, Pipes! I am glad to hear it, for *your* sake. What is it?

Pipes. Could you have supposed what I am now going to tell you? But it is true, sir, that a hosier offered me, the other day, employment in his shop, if I would knit stockings.

Capt. B. Very good; at least, you will not be idle if you accept it.

Pipes. How, sir, very good? I could have knocked the fellow down, but that my crutch had tumbled on the ground.

Capt. H. I hope this knocking people down is not the employment that you have chosen?

Pipes. It would be better far than what the hosier meant to give me. A fine sight indeed! Pipes knitting like a woman! I would see his stock of knitting-needles at Jericho first; and yet, this circumstance made me think a little. I can work, it is true, said I to myself; so I went to Mr. Wilkinson, and told him I would furbish up his old sword-blades, if he would only employ an ancient soldier. He consented; so that I shall still have the handling of warlike weapons, and receive besides a shilling a day. Let me beg, captain, that you will accept it for my maintenance.

Capt. B. No, my friend; keep what you earn. You have other calls for money; and for my part, I want nothing.

Pipes. Nothing! when you almost live on bread and water? Nay now, captain, you are far too proud, believe me; and refuse a shilling for no other reason than because I am not your equal! A vengeance

on this wooden leg of mine, that has prevented me from being a colonel, for what any one can tell!

Capt. B. You do not know me yet, I see, my friend; for, were I to accept a gift from any one, it should be only from the king and you.

Pi. What, the king and I together! and in a breath?

Capt. B. My king is only my master. In my friend, I see a sort of god; and you, Pipes, are the only friend that is left me.

Pipes. Then, my friend—captain, take my shilling.

Capt. B. I have already told you, I could put it to no use, and did not misinform you; but, on second thoughts, a time may come, when I shall need a great deal more. Lay by as much as you can save of this daily shilling, that, whenever I may want your savings, you may then assist me.

Pipes. I understand you. It is for my sake, rather than your own, that you counsel me to act thus savingly. No matter; I will pursue your counsel literally, and my money shall be sacred. It shall go in nothing but tobacco; and I will take care how I get into a passion, that I may not break my pipe.

Capt. B. I praise your resolution; but go at present and smoke one to the honor of our friendship. Mrs. Barton, I observe, is coming; and I wish to have a little conversation with her by myself.

Pipes. Yes, I will leave you; a little walk will be of service to me. Your discourse has had an effect on my spirits. I shall quickly be composed again. [*Exit*

SCENE II. *Captain Barton, Mrs. Barton.*

Mrs. B. What has happened, my dear? You sent the children to me; and I thought I saw upon their countenances something not quite natural to them. I conceived it not so proper to ask *them* the reason, but came to know the whole from you. Hide nothing from me, I beseech you! Has any new misfortune happened that I may lighten by commiseration or consolation?

Capt. B. No, my dear! With your assistance, I can bear all sorrows; and, if unforeseen affliction were to come upon me, after the experience I have had of your philosophy and fortitude, I would not hesitate to tell you of it. But be of comfort! nothing fatal nor unfortunate has happened.

Mrs. B. What then could occasion the uneasiness which I noticed in their countenances?

Capt. B. Our old soldier caused it, whose excess of zeal and friendship for me carried him so far, while they were present, as to vent complaints concerning the injustice of my lot. I observed that they were affected by the strength of his expressions; and, as I thought such invectives might inspire discouragement, I sent them to you; in order that Pipes' murmurs, being followed instantly by your caresses, might not make a wrong impression.

Mrs. B. Poor things! they know not what sad misfortunes they are to experience upon earth!

Capt. B. I hope their fortune will not be so lamentable as you anticipate; for hitherto, at least, they have had no great cause to complain.

Mrs. B. What, my dear, when they are utterly deprived of all the advantages which they might reasonably have expected in life ?

Capt. B. They never knew them; therefore never can the want of those advantages afflict them. Possibly they might have only served to soften and unnerve their strength, as well as understanding. The hard life, to which they have been used, has given them a robust and sound constitution, and an energy of mind. Instead of pursuing frivolous or puerile amusements, they know already how to convert their labor into pleasure. If God's providence should grant them any of the gifts of fortune, they will then yield the more enjoyment; but, supposing they are all decreed to pass their days in the privation of this life's conveniences, they will have learnt to undergo their fortune without murmur or complaint. Shall I tell you what I think, my dear ? I do not look on the condition to which we are destined, as so very lamentable ; for, surrounded by the pleasures of the world, should we have known those tender sentiments for each other, which we certainly have learnt, in what men call the school of adversity ? Hurried on by pleasure, we should each have gone in quest of friends who would have left us in adversity, and perhaps have aggravated our afflictions by their treachery; while now, unfortunate as we are, we have it in our power to make each other happy, by our mutual friendship. There are many miserable individuals in the world, who are even destitute of

bread to eat; we have never experienced such want, nor stooped to procure it by dishonor. If, as is the case, we are under the necessity of living upon what may certainly be called a very common diet, in order that our children may not want education—we enjoy, on the other hand, their gratitude, and witness their improvement in knowledge. We are conscious that we have not neglected one tittle of our duty towards them. Every generous notion that they possess is our work; it is our lessons and example which enables them to possess it. They will do no laudable or virtuous action in their future lives except what an honest pride will permit us to attribute to ourselves; and, if any among them should be raised to distinction by his merit, I am confident he will not leave us in our old age, when we may more particularly want succor.

Mrs. B. O, my dear husband, how does your fortitude sustain me!

Capt. B. On the contrary, dear wife, it is your constancy that upholds my fortitude. Without support, I should have long since sunk beneath the burden of my sorrows; but, seeing you renounce the delicacy, and subdue the weakness inseparable from your sex, that you might properly discharge your duty, how could I seem less firm than you were, and not blush at being called a man?

Mrs. B. Ascribe not so much honor to me for any sacrifices that I have made. They must be nothing, compared with a mother's wishes and I

would make still greater, if, on such conditions, I might have the prospect of happier fortune to befal my children. But, my dear, have you renounced all thoughts of soliciting your friends? Are you without hope that such solicitations would be attended with success?

Capt. B. You know the issue of my former applications. If I then experienced nothing but denials, when more recent services spoke for me, shall I hope a better fortune now? and if the hollow-hearted friend, who deceived me, would not at that time second my just expectations with his influence, who will now espouse the application of a man so many years forgotten? My very silence since that period would be urged as a pretext for new refusals; and fresh disappointments would only re-open wounds as yet not quite healed. I have thrown away almost my whole dependence to procure me nothing but vexation; I shall therefore hardly be so rash, as to consume what is left me in such steps as, if unsuccessful, would end in desperation.

Mrs. B. Desperation?

Capt. B. Yes; even if they should cost me nothing but the time which I must purloin from the instruction of my children. If I durst have any hopes, and should again be disappointed, I am convinced I could not survive; or should at least drag out the wretched remnant of my life in sorrow. No, dear wife; let us not imitate those parents, who imagine they have done enough, in yielding some small portion of their superfluities, and that too with reluc-

tance, in order that their children may obtain an education. Let us prove our love, by dedicating even our necessaries to their wants. Let us consent to live on bread, if such a sacrifice be needful, that in future they may show themselves to have been educated in a manner worthy of their parents.

Mrs. B. And I trust in heaven they will do so: for surely we have not given life to monsters.

Capt. B. I have already such a hope concerning Edward. Child though he be, I have frequently remarked his depth of understanding, openness of temper, and ingenuous way of thinking; qualities that I would desire to find in my friend. He will have two motives for seeking advancement, and those such as operate very forcibly on noble minds: He will have obstacles to overcome, and thereby so much the more glory to acquire. With what ardor have I observed him, particularly these two years past, resign himself entirely to study, and digest the greatest difficulties! With what enthusiasm has he seized at the recital of some glorious action! I have often noted him retiring in thought, that he might narrowly examine the transactions both of Rome and Sparta, and observe the infancy of the most celebrated heroes. In a search like this, no wonder that the achievements of a Cyrus should inflame his nature to resemble him in temperance, fortitude, and reputation. I believe that nothing but some happy circumstance is wanting to proclaim him already, what he may one day become.

Enter Paul, Theodore, Lucretia, Isabel.

Paul. You were speaking, father, about Edward

Capt.B. True, Paul, I was so. You are sensible, there is scarcely a moment of the day, in which I do not think of one or another of you.

Isa. Have you had a letter from him?

Capt.B. Not to-day! but then I know him, my child, so well, that I can tell, at any time, what he is about, without his writing to me. For example; I am sure that, at this very moment, he is thinking to afford me a proof of his affection, by a diligent attention to his studies. I am sure, Paul, that his good behavior will be serviceable to your introduction, when the time comes that you must go to school, and have the same instructer.

Paul. And, as I am to go before Theodore, I will do every thing in my power to introduce *him* likewise with the same degree of credit.

Capt. B. I was sure that you would make me such a promise. In your situation, my dear little fellows, destitute, as you are sensible you are, of wealth and patrons, your advancement in the world must be at first entirely owing to yourselves, you must be your own patrons, since it depends, at all times, upon the efforts you make to excel each other. In truth, the elevation of all three may be the happy consequence of good behavior in one only: as the bad behavior of one only may involve the other two, and be a bar to their good fortune. So that you may see, on one hand, what disgrace, and,

on the other, what honor, may be expected from the turn of your conduct.

Paul. But, father, you know, we heard Pipes say just now, that you had not been recompensed for your services!

Theo. I am sure, however, you were never found deficient in your duty.

Isa. So pray tell us why the king has for so many years forgotten you?

Capt.B. Possibly because there have been many to reward, more worthy than myself; or because the expenses of government prevent his generosity. I have besides neglected, for a long time, all applications to his justice, in order that I might be better employed upon your education. But, when you enter into public life, you will be able, by proper conduct, to turn his royal eye upon your father; and if so, I shall doubly enjoy his benefits.

Paul. O, if it depend upon my conduct——

The. What! and shall we then be able to repay you every thing that you have done on our account?

Capt.B. Yes; and to the full. I will not raise the value of those sacrifices which your good mother and myself have made to your instruction. We have constantly submitted to them unrepiningly, and even with the greatest pleasure. Providence already recompenses us, by planting in your hearts the promise of those virtues which will gratify our hopes. But, if you were in future to deceive us, and conduct yourselves in such a manner that the fruit of all our sacrifices would be lost, what then would

be the dismal consequences? your poor sisters brought to poverty! your mother in despair! and my grey hairs descending with sorrow to the grave!

Paul. No; it shall never be so.

Theo. Be assured, if you love us, we shall do every thing in our power to make you happy.

Capt. B. My existence totally depends upon you; and through you I am to live or die.

Paul. In that case, you will live while we have a single drop of blood within us.

Theo. We will rather die a thousand times, than willingly dishonor you.

Capt. B. I receive this assurance, my children, in the sight of heaven, and can have nothing else to wish. I shall be indebted to you for the greatest happines that is to be enjoyed in this world.

Luc. O, how badly off are we, father, who cannot, by our public conduct make you happy!

Capt. B. You may make my happiness still greater, by so acting in this retirement as to occasion me the tranquil and permanent joys peculiar to a father. What will there be wanting to my happiness, if, whilst your brothers honor my old age by their laudable actions, you, together with your sister, comfort our fireside with your attention, and adorn it with your virtues? What additional felicity can I entreat of heaven, if I live to see you merit the distinction gained you by the fame and glory of your brothers? [*He takes Mrs. Barton by the hand.*] Dear wife! can you imagine what would be our transports at so fair a prospect, when both joy and

honor, caused by each of those to whom we have given birth, should fill our dwelling !

Paul. You say nothing, dear mother !

Luc. You weep !

Mrs.B. It is for joy, my children. I was indulging myself in the happiness which your father has just described.

Paul. We promise that we will do our utmost not to disappoint you. And as for Edward, I will answer for him just as he himself would, were he present. [*Mrs. B. affectionately embraces them.*]

Enter Pipes, rushing in.

Pipes. O my worthy captain !

Capt. B. What is the matter ?

Pipes. I have seen him—he has returned ?

Capt.B. Returned ?—who, Pipes ?

Pipes. He, sir ; my best friend ! the only friend I have ! except your honor !

Capt.B. Do you mean Edward ?

Mrs. B. My son ?

Paul. My brother ?

Luc. and Isa. Where—where is he ?

Theo. O my dearest Pipes, is Edward coming ?

Pipes. Do you ask me, when I have told you ? Why, he almost upset me, throwing his arms about my neck. The excellent young man ! still the same ! He is coming after me. I hear him on the stairs.

Mrs. B. Why does he return ? O heaven ! he has been only ten days absent ! Can it be, that——

Capt.B. What, suspect Edward ! This is the first reason for displeasure you have ever caused me !

Mrs. B. Pardon my uneasiness! Yet what are we to think on this occasion?

Capt. B. Any thing, or every thing, rather than imagine he has done amiss.

Enter Edward.

Edw. [*springing to his father.*] My dear, dear father! how rejoiced I am to see you!

Capt. B. My dear Edward! What can be the reason of your coming back so unexpectedly?

Edw. It is explained in this letter. Read! [*He gives a paper and runs to his mother.*] My dear mother! you will be very happy! [*He returns to his brothers and sisters, and salutes them.*] How are you, dearest Isabel, and Lucretia? and you, Paul and Theodore? You were far from expecting to see me so soon, were you not? You will however be glad of my return, when you know the reason of it.

Isa. We are glad already, without knowing it.

Edw. I had yesterday drawn up a letter for my father, with good news in it, and the hopes of much better; but my master, being on the point of setting out for London, on the subject of that better news, thought proper to detain the letter; and, succeeding in the object of his journey, it was instantly determined that I should come myself this morning.

Capt. B. [*reading.*] What is this! The king allows me a pension of three hundred pounds a year!

Mrs. B. Can it be?

Pipes. Bombs and cannon! if it were only true!

All the Children. How, how, father?

Capt. B. Read the whole yourself, dear wife.

And who is the generous man who has thus condescended to enumerate my services in presence of the king, when every one beside had abandoned me? The king then knows that I have not served him without some degree of honor! O my prince! I could certainly have been happy, though deprived of your munificence, but not of your esteem. Dear Edward! who has been my benefactor?

SCENE THE LAST. *Edward runs out hastily and soon returns with the Master of the Military School and Eugenius.*

Edw. Here is our friend, and second father. See here too, my brother Eugenius. A new son for you and mother.

Mas. Pardon me, sir, that I have been so free as to intrude upon you without leave; I was not willing, I confess, to lose the affecting scene to which I am now witness.

Capt. B. You may well expect the liberty of being witness to it, since it is all of your creation.

Mrs. B. And is further gratifying to the feelings of your benevolent heart.

Mas. I am indeed most happy, madam, to perform a character therein, although not the hero. It is to Edward, your son, that the honor of that character appertains.

Capt. B. To my son?

Mas. You had deprived yourself of almost every comfort, that you might form his heart and understanding; and on his part he deprived himself of his

enjoyments, to evince the gratitude he owed you. Pardon me, good sir, if I appear acquainted with the secrets of your family. Your son has not betrayed them. I read them in his bosom. Ever since he was with us, he would take no sustenance but bread and water. All our menaces did not procure an explanation of his motives for such abstinence; and by insinuation only did I finally know it. He resolved to be no happier than his father, who denied himself so many things on his account. We spoke about you, and I learned your situation. I caused intimation of it to be made to our good sovereign; but your name, it seems, was in his recollection; and he said, that he thought himself quite happy, in the means of recompensing as he did, your ancient services and the care you took in bestowing such an education upon your children as must render them the most valuable officers. The worthy nobleman, who mentioned you to the king, even told me, that, in saying these words, he shed tears.

Capt. B. O sir, forgive the weakness of nature. I had strength sufficient to endure misfortunes; but not half enough to endure such joy! My son! my dearest Edward! are you capable of such generous affection to your father?

Edw. Pardon me: I have but for a little time done in your behalf, what you have been doing for many years on my account. [*He turns towards his mother.*] My dear mother! do not grieve, I beseech you, now that you are rich.

Mas. Remember, I also mean to be your father.

Edw. O yes; always! So, father, embrace Eugenius my new brother! we have vowed for ever to love each other.

Eug. Yes; and I, on my side, never shall forget my promise.

Mas. I have been so free, sir, as to bring my son with me to your house, that he might contemplate the virtues that flourish here. He has read the heart of Edward many days before myself; and he it was who first desired his friendship.

Capt. B. If you thus give him a friend, in the person of my son, I ought to find another for myself in the person of his father.

Mas. I can wish for nothing with greater ardor than such a title; and, on my part, offer you my pledge of friendship. [*Holding out his hand.*

Pipes. I can be no longer an indifferent looker-on! [*he lets his crutch fall, and rushes in between them.*] Excuse me, sir; but where my captain gives his heart, *mine* also must go with it. You are a generous man! were you not, Pipes would never flatter you by calling you so.

Capt. B. Pardon, sir, the bluntness of a soldier; he is full of honor, and this mark of his affection for me cannot be a matter of indifference to you. It has been my consolation under many sorrows.

Mas. Then I take his affection in good part. Your hand, comrade; for soldiers are all brothers.

Pipes. O my other good supporter, where are you now? But I will dance without you at the thought of such a happy day.

THE AFFECTIONATE MOTHER.

LETTER I.

TO MRS. TORRINGTON.

MADAM,

HIS address, perhaps, will cause you some surprise; or possibly you may have looked for such a greeting. I find it necessary; and of course, without preface, pass to the subject which extorts this letter from me.

You may remember, there was a time when I sincerely loved you, and when you appeared to merit my affection. That time is now past. You have found an object worthier of your love than I am; and, since you act upon the idea of promoting your felicity by such a preference, I do not wish to thwart you. We are free. Do you retire where you think fit, while I live where I please; and that is here. I grant you a week's time to make your choice. I go away to-morrow morning, and shall stay from home till Monday next, that you may not be incommoded with my presence, or endure that trouble, of which it does not suit me to be a witness.

Respecting our three children, you may be at peace on their account. Their mother, after her

behavior, must no longer have the least communication with them; and whenever I think fit to make inquiry, I shall find some governess who is qualified to bring them up according to their station.

Receive for ever my adieu. Enjoy in peace your new condition, and endeavor, as much as possible, to blot out the remembrance of that man, who formerly was proud to subscribe himself your loving husband, but is now no more than, &c.

ARTHUR TORRINGTON.

LETTER II.

TO MR. TORRINGTON.

SIR,

I should in vain endeavor to describe the different emotions raised in my soul, by the perusal of your letter. You resolve that a separation shall take place between us. Since you judge an open rupture needful, I submit to your good pleasure. If, when we were first united, any one had told me that all our mutual vows would come to this, I should not have believed that such an event were possible. Yet it has taken place. In my misfortunes, however, I have one consolation left; namely, that in heaven there is a God, who has the means of manifesting innocence. My conscience clears me of reproach. My heart has no object worthier of my regard, as you say, than you are. It has always been devoted to you only. I protest all this, not making use of oaths, but a simple affirmation, which my heart pronounces with assurance. I will

make no effort to convince you of my innocence and of your injustice. I shall patiently pursue the the path which God's providence points out to me —God's providence, which has hitherto heaped its blessings upon me ; and, I hope, will still continue so to do.

It is a cruel step, sir, to take all my children from me. I must think, the mother, who first gave them birth, has a greater title to them than a father ; and the laws would grant me the society of one, at least: but do not imagine that I have such a doubt of your paternal tenderness and desire to make them happy as to have recourse to legal aid against you. I will with resignation imagine, that God's will has torn them from me by death, or that I am dead myself, and shall be very quickly followed by them.

Farewell, and be at all times happy, most unjust, yet dearest husband. Every night and morning I will pray God that, for your own repose, he may remove the mist of error from before your eyes, convincing you how faithful and affectionate a wife you are at present wronging, in the person of your desolate AMELIA TORRINGTON.

SCENE I. *Mrs. Torrington, Harriet, Sophia, and Caroline.*

Har. Here we are, mother.

Mrs. T. Come hither, my dear children. Sit down by me ; I have something to tell you.

Car. Take me on your knee, pray do, mother.

[Mrs. T. takes Caroline in her arms and weeps.

Har. What is the matter, dear mother? why do you cry?

Soph. I have done nothing, at least that I know of, to displease you.

Car. Nor I either, dear mother.

Children. [*while the mother cannot speak for tears.*] Mother! dear, dear mother!

Mrs. T. Do not be uneasy, my sweet children, I beseech you. Do not cry thus, or you will distract me.

Har. Then why did you first cry yourself? Why did you weep so yesterday? the day before? and every day since you received my father's last letter?

Mrs. T. Do not ask me, my poor girl! You will know soon enough. All that I can tell you at present, my dear children, is, that I am forced to leave you to-morrow morning early.

Soph. And do you not intend to take me this time, as I was promised? Harriet, you remember, went with you last year.

Mrs. T. I wish I could, my life; and not you only, but your sisters also; it is not, however, in my power.

Har. At least, mother, I hope you mean to return very soon.

Soph. And will you bring me something pretty?

Car. And me too?

Har. What, sisters! can you see how sad mother is, and yet ask her for playthings? If I durst——

Mrs. T. Well? what, my dearest Harriet?

Har. You will never come back to us. I know it. You are always sorrowful when you quit us;

but you never wept so much as now, when you were going on a little journey.

Mrs. T. Do not alarm yourself, Harriet. In about six weeks I shall come back and see you.

Soph. In about six weeks! and what are we to do, so long, without you?

Car. I can never play so well, you know, mother, as when you are with me.

Mrs. T. Your father will come back next Monday.

Har. And not find you here to receive him!

Soph. He will be very sorry to find you absent.

Car. So pray stay at least till he comes back.

Mrs. T. It will give him greater pleasure, at my return, to see me; and six weeks will soon be past.

Har. You will not inform us; but I know very well that father——

Mrs. T. Dear child, you wound my heart; and I have grieved enough already, at the thought of parting with you. Pray be comforted. We shall see each other again very soon. Receive this kiss as an assurance.

Har. [*clinging round her neck.*] O, if it were true!

Mrs. T. When six weeks are past, you will see. I promise; and you know I never deceived you. Take care of your health, dear girls, and study to amuse yourselves till I return. [*she embraces them.*] Harriet and Sophia, you that are the eldest, take what care you can that nothing happens to poor little Caroline. Think frequently of me, and I will do so of you. Farewell, farewell! [*She forces herself from them, and goes out.*]

LETTER III.

TO MRS. VILLARS.

DEAR AND WORTHY FRIEND,

I send you my three girls, and earnestly conjure you to bestow your tenderest care upon them, so that they may find a second mother in you. After the deplorable event which has deprived them of the mother who first gave them life, I look upon it as a special blessing that you so generously condescend to superintend their education. I am sensible

how great a burden I wish you to assume, and how utterly unable I shall ever be to show my gratitude for such a favor. But what will not a father dare for his children? Condescend therefore, my dearest madam, for this reason, to pardon any paternal rashness, or want of consideration, and dispose for ever both of me and every thing belonging to me.

There is one particular which I cannot sufficiently press upon your attention; namely, the selection of a proper governess. Endeavor to secure one who accords with your principles and mine. There are few, madam, fit for any thing but dressing and undressing dolls! and rather than deliver up my children to such creatures, I would leave them in a wilderness, to vegetate, without receiving any education. But, as souls which afterwards prove worthy of each other have a sort of reciprocal attraction, by a secret sympathy subsisting between them, I am not without the hope that, in so elegant a place as Bath, you will at least be able to procure some lady of irreproachable character, with sense and knowledge sufficient to educate my children as I wish. I beg that you will consider yourself at liberty to enter into any terms with such a one as you think proper, since I mean to spare no cost upon a point of such importance.

I am quite impatient for a letter from you. It would highly please me, if you would charge my eldest daughter Harriet with some part of the correspondence that will pass between us; as by such means, she will early learn to write correctly, and

to express herself with ease. It is in your power to render the great misfortune I have undergone more supportable, and to give me in my children all the joy of which their mother has deprived me. In reality, I cherish such a hope, to drive away the misery that otherwise would overwhelm me; and subscribe myself, with every sentiment of gratitude, esteem, and friendship,

Yours, &c. ARTHUR TORRINGTON.

SCENE II. *Mrs. Torrington, Jenny the maid, and Crape her footman.*

Crape. [*entering.*] Here is my lady Harbord's answer to your letter, madam, with her compliments.

Mrs. T. That is well. Is Benjamin in the house? Bid him come up: and come you with him. [*Having read the letter.*] Thank heaven, I have succeeded! [*To her maid.*] Hold, Jenny: it is meant for you.

Jen. [*reading.*] "I am quite happy, madam, to receive the chambermaid you recommend. One, of whom you speak so well, must be a valuable servant; and I thank you for the preference that you have given me on this occasion. She may come whenever she thinks fit." [*Giving back the letter with a trembling hand.*] Alas, my dear mistress, what have I done, that you send me away? In what have I deserved dismission?

Mrs. T. You have not deserved it, Jenny. You have, at all times, been a dutiful girl; and if, hereafter, Providence should otherwise dispose my lot, I

will have none but you to wait upon me. But at present, it is impossible that you should longer continue with me. We must absolutely part. Be comforted; it will not be long, I persuade myself, before I come back. I would, till then, have given you wherewithal to live, but that I feared the danger that might threaten your youth and inexperience. You will be, with lady Harwood, no less happy than you were with me, and I have recommended you to her protection in a very earnest manner. Take this little present as a token of remembrance. There is too, in the bottom drawer of my bureau, a quantity of clothes and linen, which I give you. Go, Jenny, and do not grieve thus. My eyes have enough of tears already. Go; and, when you have put all your things together, I will see you once more.

Jen. And must I quit you, my dearest lady? I cannot leave you; let me follow you wherever you are going.

Mrs. T. Let me beg, dear Jenny, if you love me, not to increase my sufferings at present with your lamentations; leave me to myself. I wish to be alone. I have already mentioned that I will see you once again before we part.

Jen. [*going out.*] My worthy mistress!

Enter Benjamin, the coachman, and Crape, the footman.

Benj. Do you want me, madam? Are you going out this morning?

Mrs. T. Wait a little, Benjamin.—Crape, how much is owing to you?

Crape. Only a quarter, madam.

Mrs. T. There it is, besides a half year more; that you may have a trifle for your subsistence till you find another place, as my affairs will oblige me to leave home. I have been pleased with your behavior in my service, and have drawn up this character, which you may show wherever you may seek for employment. You are young and know your business, and will easily procure a place. Farewell, and God be with you.

[The footman sorrowfully leaves the room.

Benj. I would fain believe, madam, that my turn is not coming?

Mrs. T. It is with great reluctance I inform you that we must part.

Benj. What, must I leave you, madam? I, that saw you almost as soon as you were born, and followed you, when you were married, from your father's house! I whom you considered a part of your dowry, and declared that you did so; will you send me away, when I have been so many years your servant? Do you think me less attached to you at present on account of my age, than I was formerly? Alas! I have no wife nor child. I have no friend but you, my dearest mistress! what will become of me, if I must now be parted from you?

Mrs. T. Benjamin, you may easily believe me, when I tell you, this parting cannot but afflict me. But I have dismissed my maid and footman, and you may judge, I cannot have occasion for a coachman.

Benj. Cannot have occasion, my lady! Are

my master's affairs in confusion then? I have wherewithal to feed your horses many years to come—your bounty gave it me. Pray then let me die in my seat, and still continue with you.

Mrs. T. This proof of your attachment is gratifying, and I feel it at my heart; but be comforted. Your master manages his fortune as a man of prudence should do; and his wife is not in want of any thing; in proof of which, I give you my three horses, and a trifle every year for your support.

Benj. What me, my dear mistress? What use can I make of your bounty? I should only die the sooner, after I received it, in grief for having lost the worthy giver. Never therefore, never——

Mrs. T. I insist on your acceptance of it, for my own, if not your satisfaction. I would willingly be happy at the thought of giving you peace and comfort in your old age. Go then, my friend; you will distress me, should you stay a minute longer.

Benj. Let me wish you, at least, a thousand blessings. I am old; yet, were I younger, should not have sufficient time to weep for having lost you.

SCENE III.

In the Parlour of Mrs. Villars.

Enter Mrs. Torrington, in disguise, under the feigned name of Lambert.

Mrs. T. Pardon me, madam, the liberty of this intrusion. I have been informed that you desire a governess for three young ladies. Though I am

far from thinking that I have all the necessary qualifications for such an arduous undertaking, yet my situation induces me to beg that you will have the goodness to make trial of me.

Mrs. V. May I ask you, madam, who you are, and your name ?

Mrs. T. Lambert, madam ; I am the unhappy widow of a man whom I loved, and still love better than myself. In the affliction that besets me, I should look upon it as a consolation, could I fill up my time with the education of your young ladies ; I beg you, madam, to bestow this favor on me, if you have not yet engaged any one. I dare persuade myself you will be satisfied with my solicitude to please. I desire no salary. I am above the possibility of want. It is only employment I request, to drive away the thought of my misfortunes.

Mrs. V. Your motive is so affecting, that it interests me in your favor. You have then no children ?

Mrs. T. I had three, who constituted all my hope and satisfaction ; but, alas ! cruel fortune has deprived me of them.

Mrs. V. I sincerely pity you ! You seem a very tender mother ; and deserve that they should have lived to recompense your feeling and affection.

Mrs. T. Ah, madam ! they are still living. But, on that account, however strange my story, not less lost to me.

Mrs. V. I cannot comprehend you ; either your affliction has impaired your understanding, or you stifle in your heart some very great misfortune.

Would you fear to trust me with it? Possibly, I might be able to afford you some consolation.

Mrs. T. Yes; you only can afford me consolation.

Mrs. V. What! I alone? Let me know then what I can do for you? There is nothing that I would not cheerfully perform to comfort you.

Mrs. T. Make me governess of your young ladies.

Mrs. V. Is that all?

Mrs. T. I have nothing else to ask; but, if you grant this, it will render me happy.

Mrs. V. I cannot express my astonishment at your words. This conversation is in some sort like a vision. Though you do not think me worthy of your confidence, I feel a desire to give you mine. I will bring in the young ladies. Will you undergo a slight examination of your abilities to discharge the employment you solicit? If, as I have not a doubt, you justify the idea I have formed concerning you, I promise to intrust you with their education.

Mrs. T. O my noble benefactress! then I have your promise?

Mrs. V. Yes; on such conditions as I have stated.

Mrs. T. I desire no better; and, thank heaven and you, I have recovered my three children!

Mrs. V. *Your* three children, madam! Wha three children?

Mrs. T. Those which you have undertaken to protect, the three Misses Torrington. You see before you their unhappy, but guiltless mother, whom her husband has parted from them. I have left my property, and disguised my name and circumstan

ces, to obtain an introduction to my children. I was fearful of discovering who I was, till I had obtained your promise. I am sensible my husband has written to you about something which he fancies I have done amiss ; but my present conduct, I dare persuade myself, has already proved how innocent I must be of his accusation. A good mother cannot be a wicked wife.

Mrs. V. [*embracing her.*] O, most affectionate and courageous woman! I want words to show my joy and admiration. I could never have believed that Mrs. Torrington was hidden beneath this sorrowful disguise.

Mrs. T. The metamorphosis has not been painful to me ; and, in future, I am determined to support it. No one, madam, except yourself, shall ever be acquainted who I am. Confide upon my promise. By whatsoever you conceive most sacred, not a word shall escape me to reveal the secret.

Mrs. V. And on my part, I promise similar discretion. But your daughters ?

Mrs. T. I shall find it a hard task to keep myself, as it were, a stranger to them, and suppress the feelings of motherly affection. But no other way is left me. Only aid me, madam, while I personate my part. As soon as the deception is established it will support itself. I should be quite without anxiety on this head, were it not for my eldest daughter Harriet. She, I am afraid, will know me. I must, however, persevere in the pious imposition.

Mrs. V. I can bear this scene or delay the introduction of your children no longer.

[She goes out, and almost instantly returns, leading Harriet and her sisters, who all curtsy to Mrs. Torrington, considering her with great attention and embarrassment.]

Mrs. V. My dear little girls, I have brought you to see this lady, whom I have chosen as your governess. I dare engage you will be happy under her. I think I may assure you of her care and friendship; and expect that you, on your part, will obey and love her, just as if you thought her your mother.

Har. [*falling into her arms.*] It is our mother! It is she herself!

Soph. and Car. Mother! mother! you have returned then? [*They all cling to her, but she maintains a reserved and serious countenance.*]

Mrs. V. I thought you would all be much deceived. I had myself the same idea of the lady. I fancied, I know not why, that she was your mother.

Har. And so she is; my heart informs me so, as truly as my eyes.

Soph. And have you brought me any thing?

Car. Ay, where is the doll that you promised me, mother? Pray let me have it.

Mrs. T. My dear little ladies, I am sorry to see you all in such an error. You know that your mother is a great way off.

Har. No, no; you are our dear mother. We cannot be deceived. You have not such a charming dress as she wears, but you have her face, and her shape, and her sweet voice.

Mrs. T. Is it possible I should resemble your mother so much? If so, I am very glad, on your account, as well as my own; it will make us better friends; will it not, young ladies? I dare say you begin to love me a little already, don't you?

Soph. O much, much, mother!

Car. And I too. If you did but know——

Har. [*weeping.*] What have we done, mother, that you should grieve us thus? that you should tell us you are not our mother? Yet we are, all of us, your children.

Mrs. V. Come, good madam, you must be what they would have you; and, since they resolve to call you mother, take that name upon you; it will give them pleasure. And, young ladies, if you like it, you may likewise call *me* mother.

Mrs. T. Well, my dear young ladies, if you wish to make me your mother, I wish it likewise; and will have as much affection for you, as if I really were so. My dear Harriet, and my dear Sophia, and my dear, sweet, little Caroline. [*She embraces them with transport.*]

Har. How happy we all are, in having our mother again! we thought continually of you, in your absence; and did hardly any thing but cry since you first left us.

Mrs. T. [*whispering to Mrs. V.*] I foresaw that Harriet would discover me; and therefore I must make her of my party, by discovering my intention to her. Be kind enough to take her sisters away for a moment, if you can.

Mrs. V. [*whispering Mrs. T.*] Yes, I understand you. [*To Soph. and Car.*] Come, my little ones, I will let you have the playthings, that your mother, as you will have her called, has brought you.

[She goes out with Sophia and Caroline.

Mrs. T. We are now alone, my dear Harriet; I may indulge the happiness that I feel in pressing you to my heart.

Har. [*falling into her mother's arms.*] Ah, now you are my good mother indeed. But pray never, for the future, tell us that you are not.

Mrs. T. Be it so, my dearest Harriet; but there is one thing I insist on, in my turn.

Har. O any thing in the world, mother.

Mrs. T. Then, if you love me, Harriet, do not tell any one that I am your mother. Call me only Mrs. Lambert; you understand. It is of the greatest consequence to my affairs; and, for a reason which I have not time to tell you now, it is absolutely necessary that I should be unknown.

Har. How, would you have me cease to call you my mother? you that I love so much?

Mrs. T. And do you think that my love considers it less painful, to deny myself the only name which can at all times make me happy?

Har. Well then, I obey; but, every time it comes not from my lips when I am speaking to you, suppose me to pronounce in my heart.

LETTER IV.

TO MR. TORRINGTON.

DEAR FATHER,

I have so many things to write to you, that I cannot tell which of them should begin my letter. We are no longer at Mrs. Villars's house, but at that of our governess, Mrs. Lambert; it is in Circus place, and a very pleasant situation. You cannot possibly conceive how pleased we all of us are with our governess. She is such a charming woman! quite as kind as our mother! She loves us just as if we were her children, and we love her just as if she were our mother! There is no need of sending your money to have masters come to teach us; she knows every thing that we ought to learn. You would imagine she considered it her happiness to teach us; and she does it in so kind and patient a manner, that we are all delighted to be instructed by her. Mrs. Lambert has paid so much attention to Sophia and little Caroline, that they now read most charmingly! As for me, I have begun a course of geography and history with her; this, with a little ciphering, and a few choice pieces in verse and prose, which I take care to learn by heart, and recite to her, employs our morning. In the afternoon, for the sake of recreation, I go to drawing, dancing, and the the piano; and, when evening comes, take my needle, at the use of which you cannot imagine how clever Mrs. Lambert is; and lastly, to complete myself in ciphering, and acquire a little

knowledge of the expenses of housekeeping, she gives me all the bills to overlook, and makes me set down every little sum of money that she expends. By these means I begin to know the price of many things, and, as she tells me, may become your little stewardess when I return home. With so much on my hands to do all day, you will perhaps imagine that I am tired at night; but I am never weary, father. I am happy, on the contrary, to think that, with her assistance, I have so well filled up my time; and should have reason to complain, if any one deprived me of such charming occupations.

I have played a little trick on Mrs. Lambert, and mean to tell you what it is. She went the other day with Caroline to visit Mrs. Villars, and left me at home with Sophia. I thought it would divert my sister if I read a little; so I took up a book, called the Theatre of Education, from the French, and read the *Poor Blind Woman*. I could not refrain from crying very much; but, to my great disappointment, Sophia did not. This quite vexed me, as you may easily imagine; upon which I pinched her, that she might cry and keep me company. She cried indeed, and more a great deal than I wanted her to do. At last I appeased her, after many kisses and caresses, but was angry with myself for having hurt her. I suppose some idea or object took off her attention while I read, and naturally thought that she would be really affected, could she read the piece herself; with this

intention, I formed a plan of putting her to con this charming piece in private, till she could read it perfectly; and Mrs. Lambert could not refrain last night from wondering at the progress which she had made. We did not let her know our secret, but purpose to catch her in the same manner again with Caroline. I am quite rejoiced that we can have these opportunities of pleasing her, for all the trouble which she is every moment taking upon our account.

These, dear father, are our amusements and our studies; to which, if you add our walks about the place, our visits to a few poor people near us, whom we now and then assist with clothes and money, and our labors in a little garden, where we tend our flowers, you will have the history of our time at large. We were never so well in health as now, and never so happy; we want nothing except the pleasure of your company. If you would only take a journey down to Bath, I would give every thing in the world that you might see this Mrs. Lambert. I am sure, no woman breathing would prove worthier of your friendship. O come, come, father!

But, you must know, I have Caroline at present at my elbow, and she asks me if I am writing to you. She is so proud of having scrawled these few days past what she calls letters, in a copy-book which Mrs. Lambert has made her, that she says she too will scribble you a line or two. It will be a charming hodge-podge, I foresee, of great and

little letters, and fine spelling, if she sets about it; but no matter, I must please her. She has a pen in hand already, and is groping in the standish for ink. She is now tugging me this very moment by the apron to leave off, and give up my seat. Adieu then, dear father. My governess desires me to present you her respects. Sophia's duty to you, and mine also. I am, &c.

HARRIET TORRINGTON.

LETTER V.

TO MR. TORRINGTON.

SIR,

You remember the punishment to which you said you would submit, if a woman could be found completely fitted to undertake the education of a child, its mother excepted. I have met with one, whose qualifications for the education of your children are even greater than your wishes; and with justice I might claim the full performance of your promise upon your head, and expect that you should set out for Bath. Lay aside your fears, however; I will not abuse my power, but show you no less mercy than the confidence which you have reposed in me. I claim one sole condition or request as a friend, and that is, to come down as soon as possible. Do not ask what reason I have for this abrupt request, as you shall know it when you are here. You have only to set out, and that immediately,

unless you wish me to repent that I have taken such concern in your affairs. Yours, faithfully.

HORTENSIA VILLARS.

P.S. Harriet begs me to inclose my note within her letter, so that you may read hers first.

LETTER VI.

TO MRS. VILLARS.

MY DEAR AND VALUED FRIEND,

I pay obedience to your letter and leave town immediately, as you enjoin me; so that this reply will not have reached you six hours before you see me. In reality I wish to have it go beforehand, and in some sort spare my tongue the shame of revealing what it is to tell you. Shall I even have sufficient courage thus to let you know my situation? but justice demands it; and I merit my humiliation. Well then, know, madam, that I have shown myself the most unjust and cruel of all husbands! I have dared to disparage the unspotted virtue of my Amelia with my scandalous suspicions; of my Amelia, I repeat, whose very looks I am now unworthy to meet. It was when I most insulted her that she was most studious to preserve my name from ignominy. One of my relations, a young man whom I patronized, was on the point of being utterly disgraced among his brother officers, for certain youthful levities which he durst not communicate to me, acquainted as he was with my impatient temper.

It was she who, with the fruits of her economy, delivered him from the dishonor that he was going to bring both upon himself and me. She had sufficient strength of mind to bear with my unworthy treatment and aspersions, rather than expose him to my indignation by revealing his delinquency. I have discovered very recently this motive for those secret interviews which so disturbed my mind, and am now lamenting with remorse my detested jealousy. But how shall I endure her presence? At her feet I will implore her pardon. I am posting to that quarter where she has fixed her retirement; fortunately I must pass through Bath to reach it. I shall see you by the way, and kiss my almost orphan little ones. Farewell! I dare not sign a name which my jealousy has made criminal.

SCENE IV.

Mrs. Villars, Mr. Torrington, Harriet, Sophia, Caroline.

Har. So, father, you are pleased with what we have told you?

Soph. And think us very much improved?

Mr. T. Yes, my children, I am charmed with every thing I have seen!

Car. As well as with the little letter of my writing? Was it not quite pretty?

Mr. T. Admirable! like yourself, my little Caroline! But where is your worthy governess? I wish to see and thank her.

Mrs. V. I see her coming this way. We will leave you with her. Come, my dears ; come with me.

[She goes out with the children.

Enter Mrs. Torrington.

Mr. T. [*advancing towards her.*] Madam, let me ask your pardon !—But—whose features do I see ? Who is this ?

Mrs. T. Well, sir, what causes this confusion ! Are you surprised that I have the care and education of your children ?

Mr. T. Surprised ! Nothing in you ever should have made me wonder had I but deserved the happiness of knowing you. My Amelia !

Mrs. T. Why bestow that name on me ? I have put it off.

Mr. T. You have, indeed ; and therefore, kneeling at your feet, I implore you to resume it.

Mrs. T. What would you do, sir ?

Mr. T. If you would not behold me die,—one word ;—one single word !—one of those sweetly sounding accents that were wont to make me happy !

Mrs. T. Well then, dearest husband, come to the embrace of your Amelia, who still loves you.

Mr. T. It is too much !—Too much !—I ask not for such a blessing !—Tell me only that you have ceased to hate me.

Mrs. T. It should be my punishment to ask your pardon, could such hatred ever come into my heart. Speak only of *my* happiness ; I think of nothing in

the world but *yours*. Come then, and let us be happy in the conversation of our children.

LETTER VII.

TO MRS. VILLARS.

DEAR MADAM,

I leave Bath with every sense of gratitude which the services I have experienced from your friendship inspire, and fly to London, where I mean to furnish a new house for my Amelia. She will follow me some few days hence, and bring the children with her. I hope you, madam, will also come and take your portion in the happiness you have restored to, &c.

ARTHUR TORRINGTON.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR HUSBAND,

Instead of seeing me or any of the children, you will have a letter full of tears and lamentation. On the day after your departure, Harriet and Sophia complained of being feverish, and were attacked with such a headache that they could not possibly keep up. We put them therefore immediately to bed. Towards evening, Caroline made the same complaint. All three are now quite covered with a very thick small-pox, of such a sort as I am told is very virulent. I must forget that I never had this dreadful malady myself. All night, as well

as day, I keep my station by their bed, and every moment fear they will be suffocated. I have felt already a lassitude and heat in every limb; but my affection renders me stronger than I should be otherwise. Their love and tenderness sustain my courage. I perceive that, in the height of all their sufferings, they refrain, as much as possible, from complaint, for fear of giving me uneasiness. In the delirium of their fever, they pronounce your name and mine, with tones of voice so moving, that they cannot be expressed; and no later than this morning, Caroline desired to see you. I replied that I could not send to London for you, lest you should catch her illness. "O no, mother," said she, "do not be afraid, I'll keep it all to myself!" 'My child,' replied I, 'you might communicate the infection to him, without losing it yourself.' "So much the worse," said Caroline, and fainted with weakness; but, soon after coming to herself, she called me, saying, "Dear mother, you have the picture of father about your neck; pray let me kiss it! There is no fear, I suppose, that *this* will catch the small-pox from me."——Dearest children! should I lose you! Should I perhaps ——I see about me the presages of a dreadful separation! Arm yourself with resolution, my dear husband! our life in this world is but for a moment. Harriet is afraid lest my letter should afflict you, and requests, with tears, that I would permit her writing something to console you. I am afraid such an effort may exhaust her, but

more fearful to afflict her by a refusal; I am, therefore, giving her my letter, and her trembling hand writes this:

"*My Dear Father,*

"*We are all three extremely ill; but yet that is nothing, so do not grieve yourself. I hope*———"

She cannot write another word. I find my strength forsake me too. I am seized all over with pain. I hear Sophia groan, and must go to her succour. Farewell, dearest friend! Take hope; or arm yourself with fortitude of mind in this distress, as possibly it may be needful. But particularly, whether life or death ensue, love always your

AMELIA TORRINGTON.

LETTER IX.

TO MR. TORRINGTON.

DEAR FRIEND,

How shall I express the melancholy news of which, notwithstanding its unwelcomeness, you must be acquainted! Try to divine the matter; for my trembling hand hesitates to write it. Caroline still lives: but Harriet and Sophia—they, alas! are in the land of spirits. Your unhappy wife, as you may easily suppose, was overwhelmed beneath this two-fold loss; for grief and watching so depressed her, that the infection which she

received soon brought her to the last extremity. Believe me, my dear friend, I would have bought her life, could I have done so, with the half of my own! But what avail these empty wishes? I can keep the fatal secret no longer. At this moment they are tolling for her funeral. She was unable to survive her children many hours. If you had flown to see her once again, you would not have known her, so much had the violence of the disorder changed her features! I was with her constantly. I did not leave her bed a moment. I received her parting sighs, and closed her eyelids. It was altogether such a scene as will forever live in my mind. I shall find it difficult to represent her fortitude and resignation to God's will. It was not for herself that she sorrowed; her last words were a fervent supplication in behalf of Caroline and you. What consolation can I give you for her loss, of which my heart has not as great a need as yours? She alone can soften your affliction. Read the inclosed, of which she wrote the first eight lines, and with a faltering accent dictated the rest. I join my voice to hers; and in the ardor of friendship, turn your recollection to the child that is still left you; and to whom you now owe, more than ever, all the love and tenderness that a father can show. I will send her to you, when she is perfectly recovered. Her endearing manner will console you, and her education occupy your mind, which otherwise might yield to painful recollections. God be with you!

I regret that I have nothing to offer but the melancholy language of condolence. Yours,

HORTENSIA VILLARS.

LETTER X.

TO MR. TORRINGTON.

DEAREST HUSBAND,

I find myself expiring. I am going to my children, who, I imagine to myself, are holding out their arms that I should follow them; and we shall rest together in one tomb. Your life is mine. I give it my surviving infant. Caroline is left to represent me. Show her all your tenderness. Be her support; and may *she* prove your consolation! Life is short, and you will both ere long rejoin us, when we shall not fear a further separation. Think not of my death so much, as of the happy place where I shall wait your coming. What I was in this life, I will still continue in another, your

AMELIA.

THE SWORD.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

LORD ONSBURGH.	FRANK RAYNTON,
AUGUSTUS, *his Son.*	WILLIAM RAYNTON,
HENRIETTA, *his Daughter.*	EDWARD DUDLEY,
CRAPE, *his Servant,*	CHARLES DUDLEY, *his Friends.*

SCENE, *an apartment of Lord Onsburgh's House.*

SCENE I. *Augustus.*

HA! this is my birth-day! They did well to tell me, otherwise I should never have thought of it. Well, it will bring me some new present from father. But, let's think what will he give me? Crape had something under his coat when he went into father's room. He would not let me go in with him. If I were not obliged to appear a little more sedate than usual, I should have forced him to show me what he was carrying. But hist, I shall soon know it. Here comes my father.

Enter Lord Onsburgh, holding in his hands a sword and belt.

Lord O. Ah! are you there, Augustus? I have already wished you joy of your birth-day; but that is not enough, is it?

Aug. O father—but what have you in your hand there?

Lord O. Something that I fear will not become you well. Look here; a sword!

Aug. What! is it for me? O give it me, dear father; I will be *so* good and *so* diligent for the future——

Lord O. Ah! if I thought that! but do you know that a sword requires a man? That he must be no longer a child who wears one, but should conduct himself with circumspection and decency; and in short, that it is not the sword which adorns the man, but the man who adorns the sword.

Aug. O never fear me, father. I shall adorn mine, I warrant! and I'll have nothing to say to those mean persons——

Lord O. Whom do you call mean persons?

Aug. I mean those who cannot wear a sword; those who are not of the nobility as you and I are.

Lord O. I know no mean persons, except those who have a wrong way of thinking, and a worse way of conducting themselves; who are disobedient to their parents, and rude and unmannerly to others; I therefore see many mean persons a

mong nobility, and many noble ones among those whom you call mean.

Aug. Yes, I think in the same manner.

Lord O. What were you saying then just now, about wearing a sword? Do you think the real requisites and advantages of nobility consist in fopperies? They serve to distinguish rank, whenever the world thinks it necessary that rank and office should be distinguished. But the most elevated rank only adds more disgrace to the man who is unworthy of the station.

Aug. So I believe, father. But it will be no disgrace to me to have a sword, and to wear it.

Lord O. No. I mean, that you will render yourself worthy of this distinction no otherwise than by your good behavior. Here is your sword, but remember——

Aug. O yes, father.

[He endeavors to put the sword by his side, but cannot succeed. Lord O. assists him to buckle it.]

Lord O. Eh! why it does not fit so bad.

Aug. Does it not? O, I knew that.

Lord O. It becomes you surprisingly. But, above all things, remember what I told you. Good by! [*Going out; he returns.*] I had forgot. I have just sent for your little party of friends to spend the day with you. Observe to behave yourself suitably.

Aug. Yes, father. [*Exit Lord O.*

[Augustus struts up and down the room, now and then looking back to see if his sword is behind him

Aug. This is fine! this is being something like a gentleman! let any one of your citizens come in my way now. No more familiarity, if they do not wear a sword: and, if they take it amiss—Aha!—out with my rapier. But hold! let us see first if it have a good blade. [*drawing his sword and using violent gestures.*] What! does that tradesman mean to affront me?—One—two!—Ah, you defend yourself, do you?—Die, scoundrel!

Enter Henrietta.

Hen. [*screams on hearing these last words.*] Bless me, Augustus! are you mad?

Aug. Is it you, sister?

Hen. Yes, you see it is. But what do you do with that instrument? [*pointing to the sword.*]

Aug. Do with it? What a gentleman should do.

Hen. And who is he that you are going to send out of the world?

Aug. The first who shall dare take the wall of me!

Hen. I see there are many lives in danger. And if I should happen to be the person——

Aug. You?—I would not advise you. You see I wear a sword now. Father made me a present of it.

Hen. I suppose, in order to go and kill people, right or wrong.

Aug. An't I the honorable? If they do not give me the respect due, smack, a box on the ear: and, if your little commoner will continue impertinent—sword in hand—[*going to draw it.*]

Hen. O leave it in quiet, brother. And, lest I

should run the risk of affronting you unknowingly, I wish to be informed what respect you demand?

Aug. You shall soon see. My father has sent for some of my young acquaintance. If those little puppies do not behave themselves respectfully, you shall see how I will manage.

Hen. Very well; but I ask you what we must do to behave ourselves respectfully towards you?

Aug. In the first place I insist upon a very low bow.

Hen. [*with affected gravity, making him a low curtsy.*] Your lordship's most humble servant. Was that well?

Aug. No joking, Henrietta, if you please, or else—

Hen. Nay, I am quite serious, I assure you. We must take care to know and perform our duty to respectable persons. It would not be amiss likewise to inform your little friends.

Aug. O, I will have some sport with those fellows; give one a pull, t'other a pitch, and play all sorts of tricks upon them.

Hen. Those, I take it, are some of the duties of a gentleman who wears a sword; but, if those *fellows* should not like the sport, and return it on the gentleman's ears——

Aug. What! low, vulgar blood? No, they have neither hearts nor swords.

Hen. Really, father could not have given you a more useful present. He saw plainly that a hero was concealed in the person of his son, and that he wanted but a sword to show him in his proper light.

Aug. Hark ye, sister! it is my birth-day, we

must divert ourselves. However, you will not say any thing about it to father.

Hen. Why not? He would not have given you a sword, if he did not expect some exploit of this sort from a gentleman newly equipped. Would he have advised you otherwise?

Aug. Certainly; you know that he is always preaching to me.

Hen. What has he now been preaching about?

Aug. I don't know, not I. That I should adorn my sword, and not my sword me.

Hen. In that case you understood him properly, I must say. To adorn one's sword is to know how to make use of it; and you are willing to show already that you possess this knowledge.

Aug. Very well, sister! you think to joke; but I would have you to know, madam——

Hen. O, I know extremely well, all that you can tell me; but do you know, that there is one principal ornament wanting to your sword?

Aug. What is that? [*unbuckles the belt, and looks all over the sword.*] I do not see that there is the least thing wanting.

Hen. Really, you are a very clever swordsman. Only a sword-knot, now! How a blue and silver knot would dangle from that hilt!

Aug. You are right, Henrietta. Hark ye! you have a whole band-box full of ribands in your room; so——

Hen. I was thinking of it; provided that you

do not give me a specimen of your fencing, or lay your blade about me in return.

Aug. Nonsense! here is my hand, that is enough, you have nothing to fear. But quick, a handsome knot! when my little party come, they shall see me in all my grandeur.

Hen. Give it to me, then.

Aug. [*giving her the sword.*] There, make haste! you will leave it in my room, on the table, that I may find it when I want it.

Hen. Depend on me.

Enter Crape.

Crape. The two master Dudleys and the master Rayntons are below.

Aug. Well! can't they come up? Must I go to receive them at the bottom of the stairs?

Crape. My lady ordered me to tell you to come and meet them.

Aug. No; it is better to wait for them here.

Hen. Nay, since mother desires that you will go down——

Aug. Indeed, they are worth all that ceremony! Well, I shall go directly. Come, what are you doing? Will this make my sword-knot? Go, run, and let me find it on my table properly done. [*going out.*] Do you hear? [*Exit.*

Hen. The little insolent! in what a tone he speaks to me! luckily I have the sword. A proper instrument indeed in the hands of so quarrelsome a boy! yes, wait till I return it to you.

My father does not know you as well as I do. But he must be told. Ah, here he is!

Enter Lord Onsburgh.

You have come in good time, father. I was going to you.

Lord O. What have you of importance to tell me? But what do you with your brother's sword?

Hen. I promised him to put a handsome knot to it; but it was only to get this dangerous weapon out of his hands. Don't give it to him again, father.

Lord O. Why should I take back a present which I have given him?

Hen. At least be so good as to keep it until he becomes more peaceable. I just now found him all alone, laying about him like Don Quixote, and threatening to make his first trial of fencing upon his companions that come to see him.

Lord O. The little quarreller! If he will thus use it for his first exploits, they shall not turn out to his honor, I promise you. Give me the sword.

Hen. [*giving him the sword.*] There, sir; I hear him on the stairs.

Lord O. Run, make the sword-knot, and bring it to me when it is ready. [*They go out.*

SCENE II.

Augustus, Edward and Charles Dudley, Frank and William Raynton.

[Augustus enters first with his hat on; the others follow him uncovered.]

Edw. [*aside to Frank.*] This is a very polite reception!

Frank. [*aside to Edw.*] I suppose it is the fashion to receive company with the hat on, and to walk before them in your own house.

Aug. What are you mumbling there?

Ed. Nothing, Mr. Onsburgh; nothing.

Aug. Is it something that I should not hear?

Frank. Perhaps it may be.

Aug. Now I insist upon knowing it.

Frank. When you have a right to demand it.

Ed. Softly, Raynton, it does not become us in a strange house——

Frank. It is still less becoming to be impolite in one's *own* house.

Aug. [*haughtily.*] Impolite! I impolite! Is it because I walked before you?

Frank. That is the very reason. Whenever we have the honor to receive your visits, or those of any other person, we never take the precedence, nor assume any superiority.

Aug. You do your duty. But from you to me—

Frank. Well, what from you to me?—

Aug. Are you noble?

Frank. [*to the two Dudleys and his brother.*] Let us leave him to himself, with his nobility, if you will take my advice.

Ed. Fie, Mr. Onsburgh! if you think it beneath your dignity to keep company with us, why invite us here? we did not ask that honor.

Aug. It was not I who invited you, but my father.

Frank. Then we will go to my lord, and thank

him for his civility. At the same time we shall let him know that his son thinks it a dishonor to receive us. Come, brother.

Aug. [*stopping him.*] You cannot take a joke, Raynton. I am very happy to see you. It was to do me a pleasure that father invited you, for this is my birth-day. I beg you will stay with me.

Frank. This is another affair. But be more polite another time. Though I have not a title as you have, yet I will not suffer any one to offend me without resenting it.

Ed. Be quiet, Frank; we should be good friends.

Ch. This then is your birth-day, Mr. Onsburgh?

Ed. I wish you many happy returns of it?

Frank. So do I, sir; and all manner of prosperity; [*aside*] and particularly that you may grow a little more condescending.

Wil. I suppose you have had handsome presents.

Aug. Of course.

Ch. A plenty of cakes and sweetmeats, no doubt?

Aug. Ha! ha! cakes? that would be pretty indeed. I have them every day.

Wil. Ah then, I'll wager, it is in money. Two or three crowns? ha?

Aug. [*disdainfully.*] Something better, and which I alone, of all here—yes, I alone, have a right to wear. [*Frank and Edward talk aside.*

Wil. If I had what has been given you, perhaps I could wear it as well as another.

Aug. [*looking at him with an air of contempt.*] Poor creature! [*To the two elder boys.*] What, are

you both whispering there again? I think you should assist to amuse me.

Ed. Only furnish us with the means.

Frank. He who receives friends should study their amusement.

Aug. What do you mean by that, Mr. Raynton?

Enter Henrietta, bringing a plate with cakes.

Frank. Much at your service, miss. [*bowing.*]

Ed. We are happy to see you, miss, among our party.

Hen. Sir, you are very obliging.—[*To Aug.*] Brother, mother has sent you this, in order to entertain your friends, until the chocolate is ready. Crape will bring it up presently, and I shall have the pleasure of helping you.

Frank. You will do us great honor, miss.

Aug. We do not want you here! But, now I think of it; my sword-knot!

Hen. You will find the sword and the knot in your room. Good by, gentlemen, till I see you again.

Frank. Shall we soon have the favor of your company, miss?

Hen. I am going to ask leave of my mother. [*Exit.*

Aug. [*sitting down.*] Come, take chairs, and sit down.

[They look at each other, and sit down without speaking. Augustus helps the two youngest, and then himself, so plentifully, that nothing remains for the two eldest.]

Stop a moment! They will bring in more, and then I'll give you some.

Frank. O no; we do not desire it.

Aug. O, with all my heart!

Ed. If this be the politeness of a young nobleman——

Aug. Is it with such as you that one must stand upon ceremony? I told you before that they will bring us up something else. You may take it when it comes, or not take it; you perfectly understand that?

Frank. Yes; that is plain enough; and we see plainly too in what company we are.

Ed. Are you going to begin your quarrels again? Mr. Onsburgh, Raynton, fie!

[Augustus rises, all the rest rise also.

Aug. [*going up to the elder Raynton.*] In what company are you then, my little cit?

Frank. [*firmly.*] With a young nobleman who is very rude and very impudent; who values himself more than he ought; and who does not know how well-bred people should behave to each other.

Ed. We are all of the same opinion.

Aug. I rude and impudent? Tell *me* so, who am a gentleman?

Frank. Yes, I say it again; very rude, and very impudent; and should tell you so, although you were a duke, or a prince,

Aug. [*striking him.*] I'll teach you to whom you are talking.

[Frank tries to lay hold of him. Augustus slips back, goes out, and shuts the door.

SCENE III.

The two Rayntons and the two Dudleys.

Ed. Bless me, Raynton, what have you done? He will go to his father, and tell a thousand stories. What will he think of us?

Frank. His father is a man of honor, I will go to him, if Augustus do not. He has not invited us purposely to be ill-treated by his son.

Ch. He will send us home, and make a complaint against us.

Wil. No; my brother behaved himself properly. My father will approve what he has done, when we tell him the whole. He does not understand having his children ill-used.

Frank. Come with me. Let us all go and find Lord Onsburgh.

Enter Augustus with his sword undrawn.

[The two younger boys run, one into a corner, and the other behind an arm-chair. Frank and Edward stand firm.]

Aug. [*going up to Frank.*] Now I'll teach you, you little insolent.

[Draws, and, instead of a blade, finds a turkey's long tail-feather. He stands still in confusion. The younger boys burst into a loud laugh, and come forward.]

Frank. Come on ! Let us feel the temper of your sword.

Ed. Do not add to his confusion. He only deserves contempt.

Wil. Aha ! this was it, then, which you had a right to wear !

Ch. He will not do any mighty harm to any body with that terrible weapon.

Frank. I could punish you now for your rudeness, but I should blush to take such revenge.

Ed. He is no longer worthy of our company Let us leave him to himself.

Wil. Good by to you, Knight of the Turkey's Feather!

Ch. We shall not come here again, until you are disarmed, for you are too terrible now.

[As they are going out, Frank stops them.

Frank. Let us stay, and give an account of our conduct to his father, otherwise appearances will be against us.

Ed. You are right. What would he think of us, were to leave his house thus, without seeing him?

Enter Lord Onsburgh.

[They all assume an air of respect at the entrance of lord Onsburgh. Augustus goes aside and cries.]

Lord O. [*to Augustus, looking at him with indignation.*] What is this confusion, sir, that I hear?

[Augustus sobs, and cannot speak.

Frank. My lord, you will pardon the disturbance that appears among us. It was not caused by us. From the first moment of our coming, Mr. Onsburgh received us so ill——

Lord O. Do not be uneasy, my dear little friend. I know all. I was in the next room, and could hear, from the beginning, my son's unbecoming discourse. He is the more blameable, as he had just been making me the fairest promises. I have suspected his impertinence for a long time, but I wished to witness myself, how far he was capable of carrying it; and, for fear of mischief, I

put a blade to his sword, which, as you see, will not spill much blood.

[The children burst into a laugh.

Frank. Excuse the freedom, my lord, which I took, in telling him the truth a little bluntly.

Lord O. I rather owe you many thanks for it. You are an excellent young gentleman, and deserve, much better than he does, to wear this badge of honor. As a token of my esteem and acknowledgement, accept this sword; but I will first put a blade to it which may be more worthy of you.

Frank. Your lordship is too good; but allow us now to withdraw. Our company may not be agreeable to Mr. Onsburgh to-day.

Lord O. No, no; my dear boys, you shall stay. My son's presence shall not disturb your pleasure. You may divert yourselves together, and my daughter shall take care to provide you with whatever may amuse you. Come with me into another apartment. As for you, sir, [*to Augustus*] do not stir from this room. You may celebrate your birth-day here alone; and you shall never wear a sword again, until you deserve one

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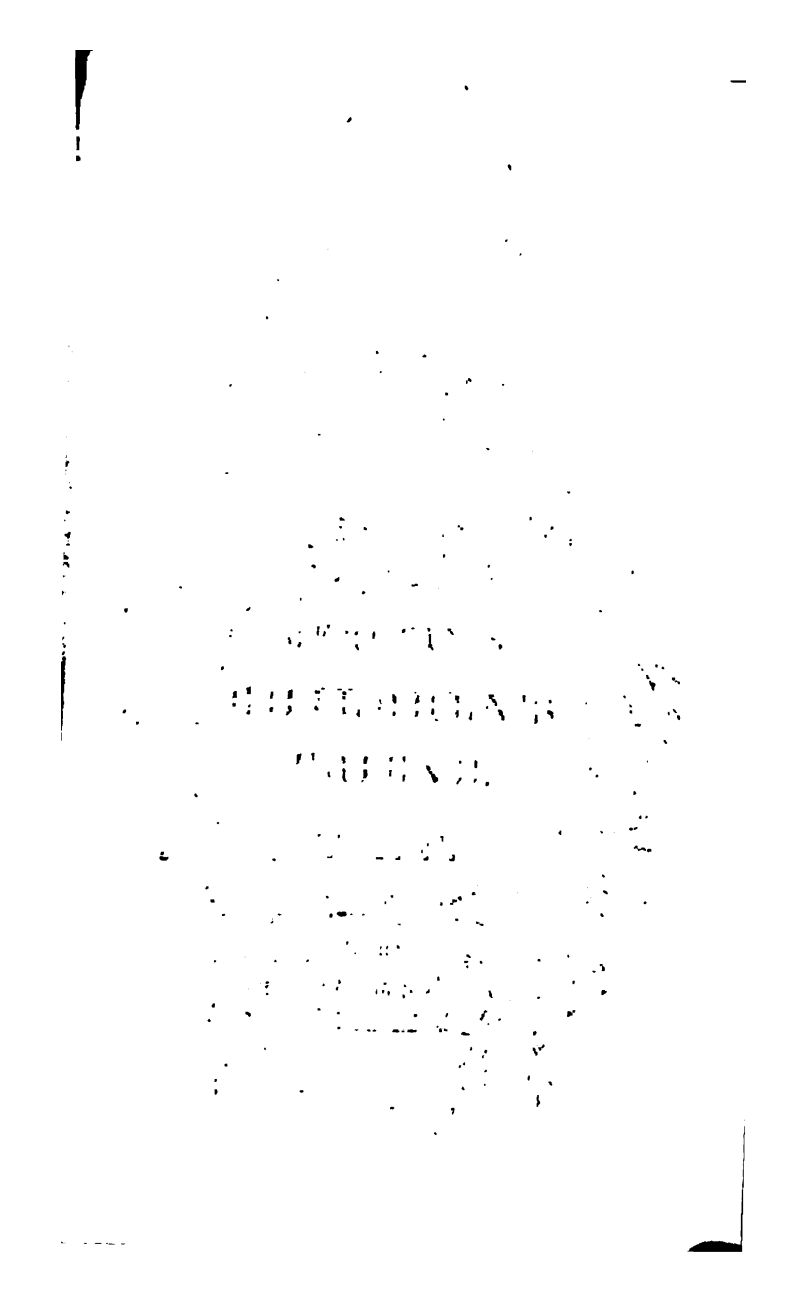

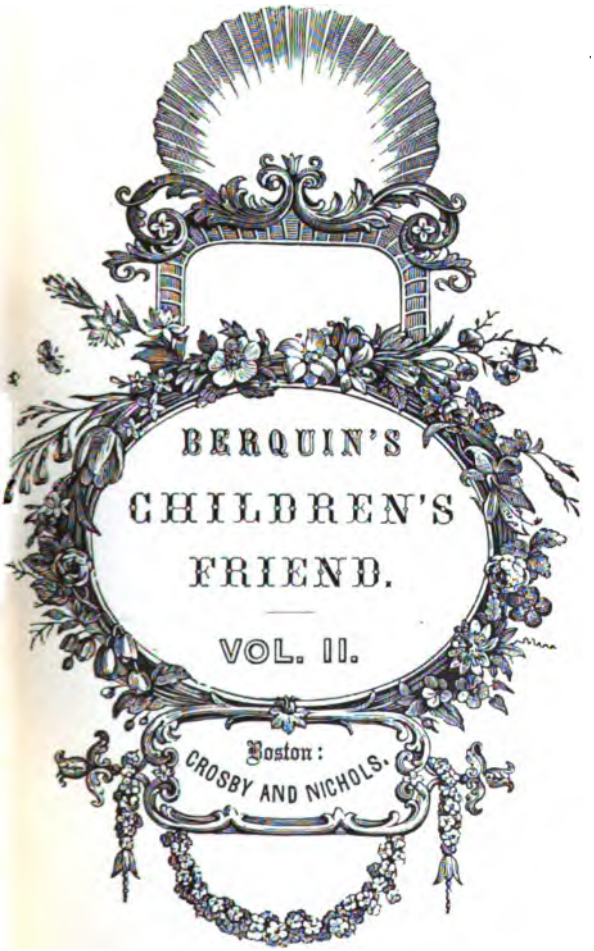
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A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH THIRTY ENGRAVINGS FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS.

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THE

CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

THE LITTLE GAMBLERS.

A DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MR. GRANDISON.	RUPERT, *Victor's Neighbor.*
JULIA, *his Daughter.*	BERNARD, *his Friend.*
VICTOR, *his Son.*	KING, LLOYD, CRIB, *Gamblers.*

The SCENE, *during the first act, is in one part of Mr. Grandison's Garden; after which it changes to another part.*

SCENE I. *Rupert and Bernard.*

Bernard.

WHAT have you to do at Victor's?

Rup. I want to have a little conversation with him, Bernard; and you are acquainted with him likewise.

Ber. Yes, by sight. You have not always been so intimate, as you are at present.

Rup. Not before my father took lodgings here adjoining his apartments. We see each other often now; and last night were together for an hour or two, at cards.

Ber. I think, of late, you talk of nothing but cards; and I have seen you frequently with King and Lloyd, of whom I can say no good.

Rup. You know them but too well; and I wish I had never seen them!

Ber. Is it so? But you may break off their acquaintance when you please.

Rup. It is not in my power, at present. Would you betray me, if I told you something?

Ber. We have long been friends; and do you fear to trust me, Rupert?

Rup. O my dear good Bernard! they have made me miserable, and engaged me to do things for which my father would renounce me if he knew them. I have not a moment's peace.

Ber. Alas! what are they?

Rup. Yesterday they persuaded me to go with them to a place where one *Crib* waited for them. We sat down to play, and I lost all I had.

Ber. They cheated you, no doubt. But still there's no great mischief done; never gamble any more, and then your loss will be a gain.

Rup. But this is not the whole. As I had no more money, and still wanted to win back my loss, I played on, and in the end they got possession of my watch, my coat and waistcoat buttons, breast-pin, and, in short, every thing I had worth selling

I likewise owe Crib a guinea; and he'll tell my father, if I can't find means to pay him to-day.

Ber. You can do but one thing. Confess the whole directly to your father. I am sure he will, upon your repentance, pardon you.

Rup. Never! never!

Ber. What then will you do?

Rup. I dare not tell you.

Ber. Let me know it.

Rup. I communicated my distress to King and Lloyd, and they advised a scheme to extricate me.

Ber. A fine scheme, no doubt!

Rup. It is not certainly the fairest, as you'll say; but what am I to do? I have already introduced them to young Victor. He has money.

Ber. Well; you surely don't mean to rob him?

Rup. Heaven forbid! They only intend to serve him just as Crib served me; and then we are to share the winnings, so that I may pay my debt.

Ber. Thus, because you have been pillaged, you would aid them to defraud your friend too? But how do you know that Victor will not win?

Rup. O no! he plays quite fair?

Ber. And you, like a sharper?

Rup. Like a sharper?

Ber. No; I am sensible you play as fairly as Victor, and on that account you have lost. Now, as I hope you always mean to play in the same manner, how can you be sure of winning?

Rup. I don't know how; but they inform me they have certain ways by which they're sure of winning.

Ber. Ways! They're knavish tricks, and would you use them? I'm not rich, and yet I would not mend my fortune by your certain ways. I'm even sorry you have told me your intention.

Rup. My dear Bernard, have compassion upon me, and I promise——

Ber. Promise! What can induce me to assist in your deception?

Rup. No; I mean to say, that, if I'm so lucky as to pay this odious Crib, I'll break off all connection with him and his friends, and never touch a card again. If I break this promise, you shall be at liberty to tell my father every thing. [*Bernard shakes his head.*] Yes, every thing. And then, it does not rest with me to cheat: I cannot, if I would; Crib has taken that upon himself. I shall only play my cards; they've promised I shall be no loser, but divide the profits with them.

Ber. Well; I'll make a party with you.

Rup. I desire nothing better, and will instantly invite young Victor for the afternoon. His father is at present in the country, and will not come back perhaps these three weeks.

Ber. Quite convenient! But take notice, if yourself should cheat him——

Rup. Don't talk so. I wish I had not told you the affair.

Ber. So do I. I should not then be answerable.

Rup. Answerable for it?

Ber. To my conscience surely. Can I see a worthy youth on the point of being cheated?

Rup. But you will not cheat him.

Ber. Rupert, if you saw a thief picking even a stranger's pocket, ought you to keep silence?

Rup. Victor will but lose two or three, or possibly four guineas, and be cured of playing.

Ber. Just as you are cured. But here comes Victor, I see.

Enter Victor.

Vic. Good morning to you both.

Ber. Good morning, Victor.

Rup. What, have you not yet been down into the garden when it is such fine weather?

Ber. Victor does not like to run about as you do, and can entertain himself in his apartment.

Vic. Yes; but I have already been walking in the garden, and even breakfasted with Juliana and my father in the grove.

Rup. [*surprised.*] Has he returned so soon? I fancy you are not well pleased at that.

Vic. Not well pleased, when he has been three weeks away!

Rup. I love my parents well enough; and yet, if they should take it into their heads to travel, it would not vex me.

Vic. For my part I could wish my father never out of sight, he's so extremely kind.

Rup. And mine so harsh, I must not think of pleasure when he's near me.

Ber. Who can tell what pleasures you expect?

Vic. I thought you were in want of nothing in that respect. Since we have lodged so near together,

I have almost every day observed you at the door, and, when I've met you in the garden, never have I seen you under the least appearance of restraint.

Rup. No ; I've always met you on the days my father dined abroad, and that's the only time I have to use as I think proper ; therefore I turn it to account. But, now your father has come home, I take it we shan't see you quite so often in an evening.

Vic. Why not, Rupert? He refuses me no pleasure I ask. However, I must say, I find no company like his ; and he frequently has said that he thinks my company and Juliana's quite delightful.

Rup. What a charming father ! Then he permits you to go out when and where you like?

Vic. He does, because I always tell him where I'm going.

Ber. And because he knows you never go except where you tell him ?

Rup. What do you do for entertainment, when you're both together ?

Vic. In the summer evenings, we frequently take a walk.

Rup. In winter ?

Vic. We sit down before the fire, and talk of fifty curious matters; or I study geography and take a lesson in mathematics. Sometimes, with Juliana and a friend or two, we act a little drama of some kind or other. You can't think how that amuses us !

Rup. Surely such different studies are enough to crack your brain !

Vic. On the contrary, they come of course, as if they were an amusement.

Rup. A game at cards I should suppose much more amusing. Do you ever play?

Vic. Yes; and my father sometimes makes one.

Rup. And do you play for money?

Vic. Doubtless; only a trifle, just enough to interest one in the game; and particularly as, by this, my father says, one learns to lose with temper.

Ber. That's quite right; we ought to husband our purse and temper.

Vic. Do not imagine I want for money. I've more than I can use.

Rup. How much?

Vic. A crown a week.

Rup. A truly good allowance! And all this to purchase trifles?

Vic. Yes, such trifles as my father would not like to have me trouble him about; and that, I must acknowledge, makes me much more careful.

Ber. I believe so. We can't help knowing the worth of things, when we must pay for them ourselves.

Vic. True, Bernard. And we naturally save in that case, as I have found it; so that, with presents and some other matters, I have now five guineas in my pocket, without reckoning silver.

Rup. So much as that! And how can you employ it?

Vic. Have I then nothing to buy? I can however dispose of it otherwise. I pay for keeping our footman's daughter at school; and every Mon-

day morning send a trifle to a writing-master I once had, who is now grown blind; these together amount to something; and I keep the rest for ordinary uses, and, among them, a little for play.

Rup. At which you are tolerably lucky. You remember you won half a crown of me the other night, at *One-and-thirty.*

Vic. I was sorry, as I always am, to win of friends.

Rup. Then you shall have an opportunity to-night of losing, if you think fit. Are you engaged?

Vic. No; I shall stay at home. My father is to draw out a petition for a widow woman, who wishes to go into the alms-house.

Rup. That's well; and mine goes out at five. Come then to me, and I'll endeavor to amuse you. We shall have King, Lloyd, and Crib.

Vic. I'll run and ask my father's leave. Shall you be here when I return?

Rup. No, I must go and give them notice of the party; but Bernard will bring me your answer. [*Exit.*

Vic. Will you go with me, Bernard? I am sure my father will be glad to see you; he has often told me of the great esteem he has for you.

Ber. I am very happy in his partiality. The esteem of such a gentleman is highly honorable; but at present I am rather indisposed, and shall remain, with your permission, in the garden.

Vic. Do; a turn or two will compose you, and I shall not be absent long. [*He goes out.*

SCENE II.

Bernard alone, musing.

I don't know what to do in this affair! Poor Rupert is afflicted! I should like to extricate him; but then to let the worthy Victor fall a victim! No; the accomplice is no better than the robber; and to favor roguery is just as bad as doing it. I will therefore go and tell the whole. But softly! here comes Juliana. Let me first of all do every thing I can to assist her in preserving Victor from the danger, and yet not betray my friend.

Enter Juliana.

Juli. What, are you here, Bernard, and alone? I thought I saw my brother talking with you.

Ber. He has just left me.

Juli. I should like he were constantly with you, were his company agreeable to you. I should not then be uneasy about him.

Ber. You do me honor, miss; but surely Victor has too much sense to give you any uneasiness.

Juli. I have no fear while he keeps company with such as you: but shall I come directly to the point? I do not think any good of those companions of Rupert; and Victor wants to mix with them.

Ber. I have not yet perceived that their company has been prejudicial to him.

Juli. True; but my poor brother, I must say, is somewhat credulous; he thinks every one good like himself. What would become of him, if those he thinks friends were not such? I have remarked, that you do not approve of Rupert's intimates.

Ber. To say the truth, my dear young lady, I wish that Rupert would be satisfied with Victor's friendship. There is, however, one advantage; his father watches over him, as yours does over Victor, and instructs him what to do.

Juli. The mischief is often found out too late; it is easier to prevent than to cure.

Ber. I am sure you love your brother tenderly, and therefore hear me; but tell no one that I mentioned what I am now going to say. Young Rupert has prevailed upon him, just before you entered, to join with him and his three intimates. They intend to play, no doubt; but do your utmost to divert your brother from partaking with them. I designed to wait here for his answer, but do not think it is proper I should carry it. I make no doubt but Victor will quickly return. Pray do not judge amiss of me that I retire; and please to think of the advice which my duty, as a friend to your brother, induced me to give you. [*Exit.*

Juliana, alone. As a friend! This looks a little serious! Ah, my poor brother! should it chance that you, who are at present all the joy and consolation of my father, were to change, and be the cause of his affliction for the time to come!

Enter Victor.

Vic. My father's friends are willing, I see, to take the earliest opportunity of paying him their compliments on his return, as if he had been absent for a twelvemonth. I could hardly thrust in a word.

Juli. You had something of consequence then to tell him ?

Vic. Of the greatest consequence to me. I want to pass the evening with my friends.

Juli. With Rupert, doubtless ?

Vic. Yes.

Juli. I thought so. You might easily have guessed however that such a friend as Rupert does not please me.

Vic. Rupert is greatly to be pitied, being so unfortunate as not to have a place in your good graces ! And what should he be to merit such an honor ?

Juli. He should be—just such a one as you are.

Vic. Do you mean to ridicule ?

Juli. No ; I am very serious ; and consider you a very amiable young man, without a fault, unless indeed it be the want of due politeness to your sister.

Vic. And why so ? because that sister is a little critic, and pretends to greater understanding than her brother.

Juli. Truly, I had quite forgot to mention modesty, when I was drawing your panegyric.

Vic. But what means this prating ? and pray tell me why these intimations with regard to Rupert ? Do you know him ?

Juli. I would know him by his actions.

Vic. Are you always by him, to remark them ?

Ju. I can guess them from the company he keeps.

Vic. I understand perfectly ; this company displeases you, because I am one of his acquaintance.

Juli. Surely, brother, he must have acquaint

ances of longer standing than yourself; and I speak of them, as I would of good-for-nothing fellows.

Vic. Good-for-nothing fellows?

Juli. Yes, that play and practise every dishonorable trick to win their adversary's money, and then spend it still more dishonorably.

Vic. O, what great crimes! they play when they are together; and they spend their winnings as they please. We do the same, I fancy. You say they play to win; but they have often lost to me.

Juli. Yes; they've lost their copper, and won your silver.

Vic. Well, if they have, the loss was mine, not yours. But this is just like what my sister is. She would be sorry if she could not vex me in my pleasures, although I do every thing to heighten hers.

Jul. [*taking him by the hand.*] No, brother; every pleasure you can have is also mine; but I would not have those pleasures hurtful to you, and deprive me of the satisfaction I receive from loving you.

Vic. I know indeed you love me; but am hurt to find you think I am incapable of guiding myself.

Juli. And yet you would not be the first that—but, here comes father.

Enter Mr. Grandison.

Mr. G. My dear children, I have just been enjoying a delightful satisfaction!

Juli. That of being visited on your return by your acquaintance, I suppose you mean? But certainly your friends must cherish you, when we

who are restrained by your authority, rejoice as much as they do.

Vic. Yes, for without you we can find no pleasure.

Mr. G. And yet you must learn to do without me; since, according to the ordinary course of nature, I shall certainly go first.

Juli. O, sir, would you afflict us at a time we thought of nothing but rejoicing?

Vic. Yes, sir, you will live, and long, we hope, for our advantage. But let us talk no more on such a gloomy subject. I have a little favor to request.

Mr. G. Well, let me hear it.

Vic. Rupert—you are acquainted with his father—he has invited me to spend the evening with him.

Mr. G. You have a new acquaintance then? I am glad you find such good company so near you?

Juli. Do hear that? good company!

Vic. I think him so; I have already sat down with him several times, and he has introduced me to some of his friends.

Juli. Good company too, I suppose?

Vic. Yes, for I must know them better than you.

Mr. G. When I used the words *good company*, I meant discreet and well bred.

Vic. Yes, sir, they are extremely so.

Juli. And how are you to know they are such, as you have only seen them once or twice?

Vic. I have been hours together with them.

Mr. G. How did your acquaintance begin?

Juli. At play.

Vic. And why not so? Father lets me play.

Mr. G. It is true, for recreation, and for such a sum as, being gained, will not induce the immoderate love of money; or, if lost, will not put you out of temper; and this likewise at a time when nothing can be done more profitably.

Juli. I think something may always be done more profitably.

Vic. Yes, (I speak only for myself) if I could confine my thoughts continually to some book.

Mr. G. Juliana's remark is not amiss. We may employ a leisure evening better than at play, no doubt, if people would be always rational, or even innocently mirthful; but, as scandal or folly will sometimes go round, in such case, you know, I let you play, and often take a part myself.

Juli. And these, I doubt not, brother, are the reasons why you play?

Vic. I don't see any right that you have to catechise me.

Mr. G. But why take offence at what she says in friendship?

Vic. Rather, sir, from a desire to injure me in your opinion.

Mr. G. Can you have such thoughts of your sister?

Juli. [*with a tone of tenderness.*] Brother!

Vic. [*with the same tone.*] Juliana, pardon me; I am in the wrong to tax you thus; but you must grant, that your insinuations unavoidably hurt me.

Mr. G. Her suspicions may have some foundation which reflects not upon you; we need not, I

think, fear our dispositions toward each other, so united as we are. [*Juliana and Victor take their father by the hand.*]

Juli. O, sir, how good you are !

Vic. You lay by all a father's authority, and are our friend.

Mr. G. If I were other than your friend, I should not be qualified to bring you up. I might perhaps connive at your neglecting outward ceremonies of respect ; but not that failure in confidence which I expect from your artlessness. You should not have a secret you would hide from me ; as, whenever you chance to be in danger, my experience may preserve you. Let me therefore ask you, Juliana, what are the objections you have formed against your brother's new connections ?

Juli. They are always engaged at cards.

Vic. Who told you so ?

Juli. No matter from whom I have my information ; the main thing is, whether it be true ?

Mr. G. I have already told you what I think of playing ; much depends upon the game you play.

Vic. O, it needs no great attention ; it is the game of *one-and-thirty*.

Mr. G. I confess I don't greatly approve of it.

Vic. Why not ? Nothing in the world can be so innocent. Whoever is one-and-thirty, or nearest to it, wins.

Mr. G. And do you know it is what is called a game of chance ?

Vic. Because one has a chance to win or lose? and must not this be said of every game?

Mr. G. With this material difference, that, at *one-and-thirty*, chance alone decides; whereas, in many others, skill is to be shown. There is no thought nor mental arithmetic in it. In short, you want only fingers, and no head, for games of chance; and in my opinion such games are utterly unworthy of a thinking man.

Juli. They cannot even amuse you.

Vic. Don't say so, sister. There is great pleasure in expecting such and such a card as you may want.

Mr. G. Because the love of money makes it so. And, as this love of money operates very powerfully, it is a strong temptation for ten thousand rogues to follow gaming as a trade; and therefore unsuspecting people generally are their dupes.

Vic. Do you believe so, sir? and how?

Juli. I fancy they must have some art to arrange the pack in such a way, as to obtain what cards they want.

Mr. G. Yes, that is in reality their secret. I cannot tell their method; but I am certain, they employ some means, and have seen deplorable examples of it in my travels.

Vic. O pray tell us what examples?

Mr. G. With pleasure. When at Bath, I was acquainted with a young gentleman, who lost in one night twelve thousand pounds, which was his all.

Juli. His all! poor youth! and how did he then do to live?

Vic. He must have been crazy.

Mr. G. Despair and anguish distorted his features, when he saw his fortune irretrievably lost. He looked so frightful that I turned away my sight; he gnashed his teeth, plucked out his hair, and beat violently on his breast; he gasped and panted like a dying man, and franticly left the room.

Vic. And pray, sir, among those who won his money, was there no one who would give it back, as I should certainly have done?

Mr. G. They kept their seats, and still continued playing; or, if their attention were turned from the cards, it was to look at him with contempt.

Juli. The wicked wretches!

Mr. G. But the worst part of the story is to follow: this poor young man destroyed himself before the morning.

Juli. O shocking!

Vic. Dreadful! and from henceforth, sir, I will never touch a card, I promise you. I'll run and tell this to Rupert——

Mr. G. Softly, softly; you are always much too hasty in your resolutions. One should never altogether give up a pleasure, because it may be hurtful when carried to excess. A game at cards, when friends meet together, may be amusing and innocent.

Juli. Not useful, sir?

Mr. G. Only so far as it teaches us to bear with our fortune; and not to triumph when we win nor be dejected at our losses.

Vic. I am not so fond of money as to hurt an-

other by my insults, in good fortune : nor show that I am myself hurt, by being vexed when unlucky. But, to shun what possibly might happen, it is best for me not to visit either Rupert or his friends.

Mr. G. If this should be your final resolution, it would only prove your weakness ; for you at least have it in your power, whilst with them, to refrain from playing.

Vic. O, I know them ; they would absolutely make me play.

Mr. G. Well, play as much as they would have you, as by that means you will gain a better knowledge of them. But, instead of going to this Rupert or his friends, invite them hither. You may also tell them that Juliana perhaps will make one.

Juli. But, sir——

Mr. G. Yes, yes ; I have a reason for it.

Juli. But suppose they win my money ?

Mr. G. You shall have it all from me again. And tell them, Victor, you expect a friend, whom you'll prevail on to sit down and play among them.

Vic. But you know, father, I expect no friend.

Mr. G. When I inform you of a friend you have at home, who will be with you, can you not guess what friend I mean ?

Juli. Sly ! why sure you understand father ! He means himself.

Mr. G. Yes, Victor ; for you recollect just now you said I *was* your friend.

Vic. O, yes ; they will play indeed, if you be of the party !

Mr. G. Therefore you shall not inform them who the expected friend is. As soon as I have finished my petition, I will return and join you. I shall see what is proper to be done. Till then, play with them and at any game they choose.

Vic. So then you would have me run to Rupert and his friends ?

Mr. G. Yes ; and do not forget to desire Bernard's company. I shall be glad to see him. All his masters praise him, and you have frequently been lavish in his commendation.

Juli. He merits every tittle of it.

Vic. Shall we meet here in the garden, sir ?

Mr. G. As you please. The weather is so fine, you may appoint them in the summer-house. It will hold all your company. [*They go out.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *In the Garden near the Summer-house.*
Mr. Grandison, Juliana.

Mr. G. We are here ; and now I need not fear they will arrive before me, and do any thing I shall not notice.

Juli. You are in the right, sir, to take this precaution, as I fear your presence will be much more necessary here than mine.

Mr. G. You fear ?

Juli. Yes, sir ; for I have told you, Bernard was with me not long since. From some words he dropped, I have reason to believe my brother's company have laid a plot to cheat him of his money.

Mr. G. All the better if he find himself their victim. I will hide behind the summer-house, just by that partition, and hear every word they say. They will enter here, and cannot discover me; but, in the interim, take care; and, even if you see their roguery, seem as if you did not.

Juli. I shall find it hard to dissemble. It will be painful to me, should I see my brother an object of their ridicule, and fall a victim to his open nature.

Mr. G. By himself alone can he be fully undeceived; as, in that case, I shall with greater ease make him careful for the future in the choice of his companions, and thus cure him of his love for gaming, which he seems too ready to follow.

Juli. How, sir, can he have a thought of going thus to cards? He ought to know himself. He is so credulous, that every sharper must suppose him proper for his purpose; and so warm, that, at the first ill luck he falls into a passion.

Mr. G. Yes; that is just his character. I did not think you so observant, Juliana.

Juli. We should be observant of another's foibles, if we mean to serve him. And——

Mr. G. A knock; it must be Rupert's friends; they do not desire to lose a moment. I will go round, and gain my station. [*He goes out.*

Juli. [*alone.*] How I long to know the result of all this! Alas, dear brother! who can tell but that your future happiness in life may depend on the decision of the present afternoon!

SCENE II.

Juliana, Victor, Rupert, Bernard, King, Lloyd and Crib.

Rup. [*to Juli.*] I was afraid, Miss Juliana, as your brother knows, that our company might incommode you ; but he would not——

Vic. Incommode her ! I'm in hopes she'll keep us company.

Juli. Willingly, gentlemen, if you think proper.

Lloyd. [*with constraint.*] You do us honor, miss.

Crib. [*whispering Rup.*] This is quite unlucky ! In politeness we must play the game she likes You should not have consented to come here.

Vic. Perhaps I shall also be able, gentlemen, to introduce a friend of mine to your acquaintance.

King. Shall you ?

Vic. Yes ; and with a pocket full of gold.

Rup. [*aside.*] That's well.

Juli. We'll stay here in the garden, if you please.

Ber. We cannot do better. We shall have the pleasure of a charming walk.

King. Do you design to walk ?

Ber. What else ?

Lloyd. Why, play.

Ber. But I do not understand your play ; and if I did, I do not wish to lose my money.

Crib. Wish to lose it ! as if it were certain you would lose it !

Ber. Sir, with you particularly. You are a great deal too skilful for me.

Vic. If I should win, I promise I'll return you every farthing.

Rup. And I too.

King and Lloyd. And we too.

Ber. You would make a fool of me. To lose my own money, and receive it back; or, to win yours and keep it, is not my wish; so do not concern yourselves on my account. I will see you play, or walk up and down the garden. [*Exit.*

Juli. My father, gentlemen, cannot have the honor to receive you, [*King and his company seem rejoiced,*] but he bade me entertain you. Victor will get ready some refreshments, and I will run and bring the cards.

Crib. That's needless; I've a pack about me.

Vic. How! about you?

Crib. Yes; I study them.

Juli. And have you counters too?

Crib. I shall beg you to get them, unless we are to stake our money.

Rup. [*asi. to Crib.*] Remember I've no money! [*Aloud.*] No, no; we shall hardly know what we are about. And so, miss, if you'll be so kind——

Juli. Enough, I'll bring the box. Come, brother. [*Ex. Juliana and Victor.*

[Lloyd goes into the summer-house with Rupert, King and Crib, while Bernard walks about.]

Lloyd. I am sorry we are here.

King. What matter, since the father is not here?

Crib. You ought not to have consented to this place of meeting, Rupert.

Rup. Here or in my room; what difference does that make?

King. And then, when Victor has lost every thing, we will carry off his money, and go play where we think proper.

Lloyd. We shall, very likely, empty the young lady's pocket also.

Crib. Yes; that's what I look for; let's take care, however. We'll put in our counters at two pence each, for half a dozen deals or so; and when the game grows warm, and they have won a little, we'll make them double.

Rup. You remember your promise, Crib?

Crib. Don't be uneasy. We know each other. All our loss shall be in counters, and we'll have no reckoning when the game is over. I'll dispose the cards in such a way, that we must lose at first, and that will draw them on.

Rup. But, Crib, you know you quite fleeced me the other day; and I have now but sixpence in my pocket. How am I to pay my loss?

Crib. Your loss! we shall be sure to win, if we attend to what we do.

Lloyd. I shall be glad if Victor's friend comes; he will be another pigeon we can pluck.

King. Yes! I know of none so easy to be duped as these same bookish fellows.

Crib. We had best begin, that they may find us busy when they come. [*He takes his cards out.*] Stay; I'll put them so that you may lose. [*He shuffles them.*] Now you shall see.

[He gives three cards to Rupert, King, and Lloyd; lays down as many for himself, and then addresses Rupert.]

Crib. Do you stand?

Rup. No; beg.

Crib. There.

Rup. [*looking at the cards.*] Out!

Crib. [*to Lloyd.*] And you?

Lloyd. One card, but not a high one.

Crib. Much good may it do you!—there.

Lloyd. Out!

Crib. [*to King.*] Now you are to be out. You beg, I suppose?

King. No; as Lloyd and Rupert are out, I stand.

Crib. And so will I. How many are you?

King. Twenty-five.

Crib. And I just thirty. I have won; and yet I might have lost by doing the reverse of what I did; as you shall see the two first games we play, when Victor and his sister come, who, having won, will then have no objection to playing higher.

Rup. But how can you be sure of winning when you please?

Crib. You have already paid for your instruction, and I'll let you know the secret. I tell every thing to friends, when I have pocketed their money. With my art, you'll win of others what you've lost to me, and so be quits.

Rup. Well, let me know.

Crib. You see, [*showing the cards*] the ten and court cards are a very little longer than the rest and all the smaller ones, as high as five, not reck-

oning in the aces, somewhat broader; by which means I can at pleasure bring the picture cards, &c. to the top in shuffling, and the five, and those below it, to the bottom. I contrive to give you two of those on the top; and afterwards the other two from the bottom; so that at most you have but five-and-twenty, and will therefore generally beg. Well, then you have it from the top, and must infallibly be out.

Rup. I understand you.

Crib. This is all my lesson, and you have it upon easy terms. Ask King and Lloyd, who so profitably follow my instructions. But I see the lady coming, so push about the deal.

Enter Juliana.

Juli. [*putting a box upon the table, with cards, and fish counters in it.*] You lose no time, I see.

Crib. I was showing Rupert a new game.

Rup. Will you sit down with us? We shall have that honor, I hope?

Juli. If I know the game that you play.

Lloyd. It is an easy game. Only *One-and-thirty.*

King. Had you never seen it played, you'll know enough to beat us at it by a second deal.

Juli. I know a little of it. It would perhaps be better for me not to play with those that know it so completely as you, gentlemen; however, if it give you pleasure——

Rup. O yes, miss, the greatest in the world.

Lloyd. Even if you were to win all our money.

Juli. [*with a smile.*] Yes, that is my intention.

King. You'll scarcely be the richer for it in the end ; we play only for a trifle.

Rup. [*with impatience.*] Well ! what are we about ? We pass away the time in talking.

Crib. We must wait for Mr. Victor ; it is but just we should amuse him, we are his guests.

Enter Victor.

Vic. Here I am. The servant will be with us very shortly. I have ordered some refreshment.

Rup. Come, sir, we are waiting for you.

Vic. Thank you.

Lloyd. Let's give out the fish.

King. There are six of us ; to each two dozen fish and ten counters ; that is ten dozen more.

Rup. But how much each fish ?

Crib. Just what the lady pleases.

Juli. O, it is rather as you like.

Vic. Our fish were two-pence each, when last we played together ; five were staked every deal by each, and half a dozen the bon-ace.

Juli. Well, be it so.

Crib. Then here goes, to begin.

[Crib takes the cards and deals. Julianna and her brother win, by Crib's contrivance, three times running.]

Juli. Hey ! if we go on in this way, I think I shall soon fulfil my prophesy.

Crib. While we play so low as two-pence, we shall never ruin ourselves.

Lloyd. Well then, shall we make it four-pence ?

Vic. O, with all my heart. I've so much money, you can't break me easily.

[Victor shakes his purse, at which Crib and his companions look with pleasure.

Juli. I can risk as much, I fancy, as my brother.

Crib. We must first pay our debts, that we may have our full complement of fish and counters. Let me see [*after having counted.*] I've lost one counter and six fish; that's eighteen fish; twice eighteen is thirty-six;—just three shillings: there they are.

King. I've all my counters, but am master of no more than two poor fish; that's two-and-twenty lost, or three and eight-pence. There.

Lloyd. I've come off worse. Two counters gone, and twice as many fish; which is four-and-eight-pence. I put down a crown and take up four-pence.

Vic. Well, and you, Rupert?

Ru. I've lost least; only fifteen fish or half a crown. I'll change a guinea, when we rise, to pay it:

Juli. Good! Now I'll see my winnings. One, two, three counters and three fish. That's six and six-pence just; of which I take four shillings, and the two-and-sixpence, Rupert, you shall owe me.

Vic. So that all the rest is to pay my four and forty fish. It is comical enough, however, that we should be the only winners!

King. O, I always lose for my part.

Rup. So now the fish are four-pence?

Vic. Yes, that's settled.

Crib. [*shuffling the cards.*] Come, I'll deal

SCENE THE LAST.

Rupert, King, Lloyd, Crib, Juliana, Victor, Bernard, [who had come in a little while before,] and Mr. Grandison.

Mr. G. [*to Rupert and his friends, who seem confounded.*] Pray don't disturb yourselves.

Vic. Sit down; my father does not come to interrupt us. I informed you I might have a friend to introduce, and he'll play with us. Won't you, sir?

Juli. O yes; pray play; we shall be very glad to get your money; and these gentlemen, I know, will like to share it too.

Mr. G. With all my heart. Every one sit down.

[To Rupert and his friends, who seem quite overwhelmed.]

But what's the matter, gentlemen? Are you afraid to play with me? I can assure you, I'm no sharper. [*They sit down at last.*] You [*to Crib*] were dealing when I entered; so continue, pray; but first let's see, have you a pack complete?

[Crib wants to drop the cards, but Mr. Grandison secures and looks them over.]

It is droll enough to have the court cards all together thus! but, Juliana, why not give us cleaner cards? Pray hand me over those——

Juli. It was not my fault, sir, as this gentleman [*pointing to Crib*] had brought them in his pocket; and the play was going on when I came in with ours.

Mr. G. [*to Ber.*] What, you here, Bernard! I am very glad to see you; but pray, don't you play?

Ber. I had rather be a looker-on; you know I have nothing, sir, to throw away.

Mr. G. You are in the right to think so, and your prudence merits praise. [*To Crib.*] But come, sir, here are better cards, [*Crib takes them with a trembling hand*] at least a little cleaner; what's your game? Pray tell me.

Vic. One-and-thirty.

Juli. No more than fourpence a fish. I've won all this! four shillings; and two-and-sixpence owing me by Mr. Rupert who wants change.

Mr. G. [*asi.*] Wants change! I suspect so! [*To Juli.*] As much as fourpence! that's a little too much; but no matter, if we all of us have enough to pay our losings. So let us see your money. Rupert, I begin with you. [*Rupert is confused.*] What ails you? Are you taken ill?

Rup. Ye-e-es, sir—Let me——

Mr. G. What is all this? one stammers, and the other seems confounded! [*To Crib*] You, sir, are disconcerted too?

Vic. What's the matter with them?

Mr. G. It is high time I should explain the reason of this strange behavior. Victor, you observe the effects of a guilty conscience. Happily they are not yet so totally abandoned, as to hide their villainy by a brazen front, and bully in their own defence.

Vic. What say you, father? Surely you're mistaken: it is my sister, as she told you, and myself who are the only winners.

Crib. [*taking courage.*] Have we failed to pay our losings, every one, Rupert excepted?

Rup. No; but why? because you've cheated me already out of all my money.

Mr. G. I was right in thinking they would unmask themselves: And, Victor, you may see what villains you have chosen for your companions.

Vic. O, I cannot think so, sir.

Mr. G. Well then, Rupert, do you speak; you seem less hardened. Tell me, was there not a plot among you to defraud my children?

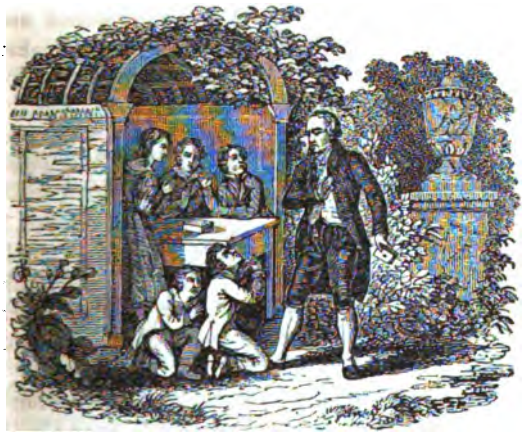
Rup. Yes, sir; but for my part, I assure you, I was forced into it. All my wish was to get back part of what I had lost. If you knew how much this wicked fellow has squeezed me, for the other two are nothing to him, you would say he should be sent to prison.

Mr. G. You have well deserved your loss for mixing with such company. How much have you lost?

Rup. Two guineas and a few odd shillings, with them all together; and my watch, waistcoat and coat-buttons, breastpin, buckles, and a guinea more in money afterwards, in private with the tallest; but the guinea I still owe him; and he threatened if I did not prevail on Victor to sit down and play this evening, he would tell my father.

Ber. This, sir, I can say in Rupert's favor, that he gave me precisely the same account this morning, and was grieved at what he thought himself compelled to do. The grand criminal is Crib, the tallest; the two others in comparison——

Mr. G. I comprehend what you would say; and therefore, [*to King and Lloyd,*] little rascals, get



you gone this instant. Perhaps it is not yet too late to rescue you from infamy; and therefore I will inform your parents of your conduct.

King and Lloyd. [*dropping on their knees.*] Pardon us this once, sir, we beseech you; and we will never again come within your doors.

Mr. G. No; I shall take care that you never do; but, it is not enough that my children should be safe in future from your roguery, I owe the same good service to your fathers and all parents. What perversity! at such an age not only to be gamblers, but vile cheats! the most hateful of human be-

ings! However, out of pity to your youth, and from the hope I have of your amendment, I will do no more than tell your parents; but, if I ever learn that you still continue your detestable employment, I will make known your infamy to every one about us. Begone; and never let me see you here again.

[King and Lloyd withdraw in silence and confusion.]

And is it true, sir, that you have pilfered these things from Rupert?

Crib. [*with hesitation.*] Yes, sir.

Mr. G. You have cheated him, but that's no matter. Rupert lost them, and has merited his fortune. We will put a value on them.

Rup. I wish I had sufficient to redeem my loss.

Vic. O, sir, if all I have in my pocket, be enough, Rupert may command it. I have full five guineas take them for the service of my friend.

Mr. G. Victor! this is very generous.

Rup. What, such friendship to me!

Vic. We are neighbors, and you may pay me weekly, or in any way you please.

[Crib gives Rupert his things.

Mr. G. [*to Rup.*] Is every thing returned to you?

Rup. Yes, sir; and I am saved, by your generosity and Victor's, from the resentment of my father. O, I will never risk his gifts again in such a manner.

Mr. G. [*offering Crib the money.*] Here's the value of your theft, for such it must be called; and you shall have it to subsist upon in prison till you

are called to answer for your crime, as, possibly, you may not have the means without it. Nay, expect not, by solicitation, to divert the rigor of my justice. Your seduction of two youths, your felony upon the property of this young man, and your attempt to make him instrumental in the robbery of another, well deserve that rigor. This must be your sentence; so withdraw a little for the present. [*Crib goes out.*

Rup. [*falling on his knees to Mr. Grandison.*] O, dear sir! from what a gulf of ruin do you preserve me! And, without your sagacity, integrity, and generosity, what would have been my evil fortune when thrust out from home, and stigmatized in public for my vices? I am indebted to your pity for my reputation, my repose, and my existence in honest society. [*He rises and embraces Victor.*] And, my generous Victor, you whom I was going——

Vic. Utterly forget it, as I do; and, for the time to come, be happy.

Mr. G. Bernard's testimony of your grief at being forced into this plot, alleviates your offence; therefore you may continue to visit my son; but, after what he has done in your behalf, I shall account you the most profligate and unprincipled of youths, unless you study to deserve his friendship.

Rup. O, I will do so. Rely upon me, sir.

Mr. G. And as for you, dear Bernard, I have reason to be charmed with what so many tongues have told me of your modesty and virtue. By

your laudable example, you may very greatly contribute to the true happiness and amusement of Victor. I request you to be often with him ; and, if I can show my gratitude in any way, be assured your happiness shall be promoted by me with as much affection as by your own parents.

Ber. Your esteem, dear sir, is sufficient happiness for me.

Mr. G. You observe, dear children, the unhappy consequences that result from gambling ?

Vic. Yes, sir, and I shall shudder all my life at the remembrance of them.

Mr. G. You observe too, Victor, with what care and circumspection one should choose a friend ?

Vic. Yes, sir ; and I am convinced, too, how happy it is for me to have a friend in my father—the best of friends.

THE LITTLE GLEANER.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

LORD BEVIL.	MRS. JENNINGS.
MARCELLUS, *his Son.*	EMILY, *her Daughter.*
HARRIET, *his Daughter.*	HARDY, *Bailiff to lord Bevil.*

SCENE. *A newly reaped field, on which still remain several sheaves of corn. On one side appears a nobleman's seat; on the other several cottages, and other objects that adorn a rural prospect.*

SCENE I.

The stage represents a field of corn, covered with sheaves. Emily, holding with both hands a basket full of ears of wheat. She sits down near a sheaf.

Emily.

WELL, this is not a bad beginning! what joy will this be for my poor mother! [*She lays her basket on the ground, and looks at it with an air of satisfaction.*] That old reaper! how good-natured he was to fill my basket; I might have run about here and there all the day, and not have picked up half so

much as this. God reward him for it! but here are still some ears upon the ground; if I could only glean a handful or two——

[She presses down the ears in her basket with both hands.

I can make it hold them by pressing down a little, and besides I have my apron.

[She rises, takes the two corners of her apron in one hand, and prepares to put into it the ears of corn which she gathers, when a noise is heard.]

O dear! yonder is a man coming towards me who seems to be angry. Yet I do not think that I have done any harm.

Enter Hardy.

Har. [*seizing her by the arm.*] Ah, little thief! have I caught you at it?

Em. What do you say, sir? I am not a thief. I am an honest little girl.

Har. An honest little girl! you an honest little girl? [*Snatches the basket out of her hands.*] What have you got in this then, my honest little girl?

Em. Ears of corn, as you see.

Har. Did these ears of corn grow in your basket?

Em. If they grew there, I should not have occasion to take so much trouble in the gathering them up and down the fields.

Har. Then they are stolen?

Em. Pray, sir, do not treat me so ill. I would rather die of hunger, and my mother too, than do what you say.

Har. 'Blood! why, they did not throw themselves into your basket of their own accord, did they?

Em. O dear! you terrify me with your swearing

Only hear me. I went to glean down in yonder field, and there was a good-natured old man who saw me at work. Poor child, said he, how she labors! I will assist her. There were some sheaves lying in the field, and he pulled out of them whole handsful of ears, which he threw into my basket. What is given to the poor, said he, God repays; and——

Har. Aha, I understand you. The old man in that field below filled your basket with ears that you have been pulling here out of our sheaves. Heh!

Em. Nay, then you may go and ask him. He can tell you.

Har. I go and ask him! yes, you may wait for that. I have caught you here; that is enough.

Em. I have not touched a single sheaf! the few ears which I have in my apron, I picked from the ground, because I thought that was allowed. However, if it is against your wishes, I am ready to return them. There are yours.

Har. No; these shall remain with the others, and you shall remain with the basket, wherever it goes. Come, follow me to the house of correction.

Em. [*frightened.*] How! don't say so, my dear sir!

Har. O yes, your dear sir! but I should be much dearer if I let you escape, should I not? To the house of correction I say, come, come along!

Em. Ah, pray do not! I have picked up nothing here except a handful of ears that I returned to you. What would my poor mother say, if I should not go

home the whole day? if she heard that I had been put in prison? It would be enough to kill her.

Har. A great loss! The parish would be well rid of her.

Em. [*begins to cry.*] Ah, if you knew what a good mother she is, and how poor we are! you would pity us.

Har. I am not here to pity people. I am here to take them up, when they enter upon my lord's grounds, and to clap them into prison.

Em. But when one has done nothing, when one is innocent as I am?——

Har. O yes, tell me of your innocence! what, come here and steal a whole basket full of corn, and then tell me a thousand lies! come along!

Em. My dear sir, have compassion on me. Take my basket, if you will; alas, my little store will hardly make you much richer. But let me go I entreat you, if not on my own account, at least for my poor mother. I am all the comfort and help that she has.

Har. If I let you go, it is not on account of your mother, that I can tell you; I could wish her a hundred miles off; it is only on your own, because your whimpering has moved me a little. But do not expect to have your basket too; the law seizes on it as a forfeit. Then, at sessions, their worships will lay a swinging fine, and if that is not paid, off to prison, and turn out of the village.

[Takes the basket upon his shoulder. Emily weeps bitterly, and kneels to him.

Go, do not tease me, or you will see what is to be got by that! [*Goes off muttering.*] Only see, if one were not always on the watch after them, little as they are, they would run away, I do believe, with the fields themselves. [*Exit.*

Emily alone.

[She sits down on the ground, and rests her head upon a sheaf. For some moments she weeps in silence, at last she rises and looks about her.]

Em. Ah, he is gone, the ill-natured man! he has carried away what was all my satisfaction. I have lost every thing, my ears of corn, my pretty basket and all; and besides, who knows what they will do to my poor mother and me? [*After a short pause.*] How happy these little birds are! They at least are permitted to come and take some grains for their food, and I——but who knows whether some ill-natured man, like this, be not watching them now, to kill them with his gun. I will frighten them all away, and then I will go myself; for perhaps they would punish me for having rested my head on this sheaf of wheat. But what two children are those coming this way?

Enter Marcellus and Harriet. [*Emily wiping her eyes.*]

Mar. Aha! was it you then, little girl, that the bailiff surprised just now, stealing ears of

corn from our sheaves ? [*Emily sobs but cannot answer.*]

Har. [*looking at her attentively, and then taking her brother aside and speaking to him.*] She seems to be a very good little girl, Marcellus. See how she cries ! Do not reproach her any more ; that would only afflict her worse : and it is not worth while for a few ears of corn which she has picked up.—[*Goes to her.*] My poor child, what makes you weep ?

Em. They accuse me unjustly ; and perhaps you think me in fault.

Mar. Then you are not in fault ?

Em. No, indeed, you may believe me. I went into that field down there to glean. An old reaper took pity on my fatigue, and filled my basket with ears of corn. I then came here to pick up a few others which I saw scattered about. Your ill-natured bailiff found me near this sheaf, and accused me of stealing. He took away my basket, and would have carried me to prison, if my entreaties, and tears for my mother, had not at length prevailed on him to let me go.

Har. I should be glad to see him dare to molest you ! We have a good father, who does not suffer any ill to be done to the poor, and who would soon have released you.

Mar. Ay, and who will very soon make him give back your basket, I promise you.

Em. [*joyfully.*] O dear, do you think so, my sweet master !

Har. Marcellus and I will go and beg of him— Do not be uneasy. He is never so well pleased with us as when we speak to him in favor of poor people. And besides, we could get your basket again without much speaking to him.

Em. How happy you are, miss, not to want help from any body, and even to be able to help others !

Mar. Are you very poor, my little girl ?

Em. One must be poor to come here gleaning, with so much trouble, what is to make a little bread.

Har. What ! is it for bread that you come gathering the ears of corn ? I thought you intended to

toast the grains on a hot fire shovel, and thus to eat them, as my brother and I sometimes do, when nobody sees us.

Em. O dear, no. My mother and I intended to beat the corn out of those ears, and to give it to the miller, that we might have flour to make bread.

Har. My poor child, you could not make much bread of that, and it would not last you very long.

Em. Why, suppose we had only enough for a day or two, my mother and I should have a day or two the more to live.

Mar. Well! that you may have another day certain, I will give you this shilling, which I have kept, the last of my money, because it is quite new.

Em. Ah, my good master! so much money! No, I dare not take it.

Har. [*smiling.*] So much money! Take it, never fear. If I had my purse about me, I would give you much more: but I will keep it for you, and you shall not be a loser.

Mar. [*still holding out the money.*] Come, take it.

[Emily blushes, receives the money, and curtsies to him without speaking.

Mar. This is doing only half. I will run as fast as I can after our bailiff, and make him give me back the basket, or else——

Em. Do not give yourself that trouble, sir. You have promised to assist me, that is enough for me.

Har. Tell me where you live.

Em. Just by, in the village.

Mar. We never saw you before; and yet we

come here, along with father, every year, about harvest time.

Em. We have been here only a week, and live with a good woman called Margaret, who has showed much friendship to my mother. O, a great deal of friendship indeed.

Har. What! old Margaret?

Mar. We know her. She is the widow of a poor weaver who was out of work. My father sometimes employs her to weed in the garden.

Har. Will you take me to your mother?

Em. It would be too great an honor. A young lady of quality like you——

Har. No; father will not let us think ourselves better than other people, and, if you have no other reason——

Em. None; so far from it, you may help me to comfort her for the loss of my basket and corn. And then that naughty man who threatened us——

Mar. Don't fear him. Whilst my sister is gone with you to your mother, I will run after him, and I think——But you will come back here again?

Em. If you choose it, my good young master.

Mar. Your basket shall be here before you return.

Em. Perhaps I shall bring my mother with me to thank you.

Har. Come! let us hasten to find her.

[Takes Emily by the hand, and goes out.

SCENE II.

Marcellus, alone.

How happy are my sister and I, not to be obliged, like this poor child, to go about picking up ears of grain for our food! Really, this little girl speaks as if she were born to something better. She has coarse clothes, but refined manners. She has not the dirty vulgar appearance of many other cottage girls. O, certainly, father will oblige me so far. But here he comes with Hardy. That is clever! here comes the basket too.

Enter Lord Bevil and Hardy.

Mar. [*running up to his father.*] Dear father, how glad I am to meet you!—[*To Hardy.*] Give me this basket!

Har. Softly, sir! you will pull my arm off.

Lord B. What do you want with that basket, Marcellus?

Mar. It belongs to a poor little girl, from whom this wicked Hardy took it, as well as the ears of corn that had been given her. You shall hear the whole, father.

Har. So, so, one is wicked for doing his duty, and for not assisting rogues in their dishonesty! Why does my lord give me wages?

Lord B. I have often told you, Hardy, it is for hindering vagrants from haunting my grounds, and incommoding my laborers, but not for seizing poor people and dragging them to prison; far less, if they be honest persons, reduced by necessity to seek a mite of nourishment from my superfluity

and who meddle with nothing but a few ears of corn which lie scattered after a rich harvest.

Har. I do not hinder them to glean as much as they will, after the corn is in ; but, while there is one sheaf on the ground——

Mar. [*ironically.*] Why not say, after the fields are fallow, or covered with snow ? There is a great deal to pick up, indeed, after the harvest is got home !

Har. You do not understand these affairs, master. Who can answer that these are not thieves ?

Mar. Thieves ! bless me, thieves ! The little girl told me herself that she had not taken a single ear of corn here, and that it was an old reaper in the next field that filled her basket for her.

Har. That is good ! she told you ; as if there was a word of truth in what those gentry say ! I caught her here close by a sheaf.

Lord B. Pulling out the ears of corn ?

Har. I won't say so much as that. But how do I know what she had been doing before I came ? And then is not all that story false of an old reaper who filled her basket for her ? O, it is very like the country people here ; those folks are so charitable !

Mar. Now I'll maintain that those ears of corn were given her, for she told me so ; and so good a little girl I am sure would not tell me a story.

Har. And pray, master, have you never told a story ? yet we all look upon you to be an excellent young gentleman.

Mar. Do you hear, father, how Hardy threats me ?

[*To Hardy, angrily.*] No, if I told stories, I should be a wicked boy; but I do not, nor this good little girl either. And it is you that are a——

Lord B. Softly, Marcellus; thus far I am satisfied with your defence. We should believe men honest, until we are convinced of the contrary. But we must never be in a passion with those who are of a different opinion; we should rather endeavor to bring them to a more satisfactory and just way of thinking.

Har. No, my lord; it is much better to believe all men wicked, until we see beyond a possibility of doubt that they are honest; that is much the wisest maxim. When I meet an ox in my path, I always suppose him to be vicious, and get out of his way. It may be that he is not dangerous, but I run no risk in being cautious. The surest way is always the best.

Lord B. If all men had your manner of thinking, with whom could we live? And what dealings could ever have subsisted between you and me, if, instead of putting you into an honest service on my estate, in order to afford a livelihood to a disbanded old soldier, I had given you up to the magistrate as a vagrant, having neither discharge nor certificate?

Har. Yes, that is very true; but it is also true that I am an honest man.

Lord B. I keep you in my service, on that account; but I had no foundation for believing it at first, except your word and your countenance.

Mar. My dear father, if you depend upon one's

word and countenance, you will much sooner believe our little girl than Hardy.

Har. Ay, master! look at my face. Your father will certainly be well satisfied with the countenance of your little girl, if it convey so favorable an impression as mine does.

Mar. O yes, it becomes you very well with that bear's face, to——

Lord B. Fie, Marcellus! Hardy, do you know this little girl?

Har. Yes, my lord; I know her, and I do not know her. I know that she has been here about ten days with her mother; but how or why they came here, the overseers can best inform you. And, to speak my mind freely, it is ill-done of them to receive such folks into the parish to increase the expense of the poor's rate.

Mar. Well, I'll take that expense on me; yes, I.

Har. Why, have you any thing of your own, sir?

Mar. If I have nothing, my father has enough.

Har. In the mean time, all the parish murmurs; but, when once you grease the fist of people in office, [*imitates the action of counting money,*] for I am pretty sure the overseers——

Mar. Look there, if he be not speaking ill of the overseers! it will be well done to tell them.

Lord B. Softly, child. I see, Hardy, it is difficult to cure your suspicious temper; so that I am inclined to suspect in my turn. You judge that this little girl has filled her basket here, because you found her near a sheaf. You judge the overseers

would receive a bribe because they have admitted a poor family into the village. Well then, I judge that you only kept the child's basket, because she had no money nor tobacco to give you; and that, in such case, you would freely have released her.

Har. How, my lord! can you imagine?

Lord B. Why may I not think of you, as you allow yourself to think of others?

Har. Well, my lord, I had better hold my tongue. And, were I to see those beggars carry away your fields, your groves, and your meadows ——Shall I take this basket to the steward?

Mar. O no, dear father, I beg it as a favor.

Lord B. Hardy, you will take it to the poor woman's house, and make an apology to the little girl.

Har. Apology, my lord? apology? can you think of such a thing? I make her an apology? for what?

Mar. For what? for having given her so much uneasiness without cause, and for having affronted her by accusing her of a base action.

Har. If they have no apology nor basket until I—

Lord B. If I had been guilty of injustice to you, Hardy, I should not hesitate to make amends. And to convince you of it, I will go myself; I will carry back the basket, and make an apology in your name.

Har. Or rather, do you, master Marcellus, take that charge upon you.

Mar. O, with all my heart. Father, the little girl is to come back presently with Harriet, who is gone to comfort her mother. I must wait for her.

Har. In that case I have no business here. [He

goes off muttering.] I see we shall have so many beggars in this village, that we must soon go begging ourselves.

SCENE III.

Lord Bevil, Marcellus.

Mar. Do you hear what he says, father?

Lord B. Yes, my dear; I am willing to excuse his humors.

Mar. But how can you keep so ill-natured a man?

Lord B. He is not ill-natured; but his overmuch zeal to serve us leads him astray. He is most faithfully attached to me, and fulfils his duty punctually.

Mar. But then, if he be unjust?

Lord B. You heard him say that he did not think he was. His only fault is, that he follows his orders too literally, and that he has not discernment enough to make the proper distinctions between persons and circumstances.

Mar. Pray explain that to me, father.

Lord B. With pleasure, my dear. When I hired this man, I gave him in charge to rid my grounds of vagrants, and carry trespassers before a justice. This order could only regard those wretches who live by theft and robbery, or should come here in order to defraud or molest our tenants.

Mar. I understand. He looks upon all those as rogues who subsist upon charity, and never inquires whether old age, sickness, or inevitable misfortunes, have reduced them to that condition.

Lord B. Very right, my dear boy! circumstances alter things essentially. For instance, you did

not show sufficient reflection in your dispute with him. Can you tell whether the mother of this little girl is not a dishonest person? whether the little girl herself has not told you an untruth, and actually stolen those ears of corn out of my sheaves?

Mar. No, dear father, it is impossible she stole!

Lord B. Why impossible? do you clearly know every thing? Do you know who she is, who her mother is, and with what view they have come here?

Mar. If you had only seen her! if you had only heard her speak! her language, her countenance, her tears! Then she is so poor as to have occasion for a handful of wheat ears to make her bread. Need one know more than this? Should I let a poor person perish with hunger because I do not know as yet whether he merit my assistance?

Lord B. Let me kiss you, my dear boy! Preserve always these generous dispositions towards the poor, and similar sentiments in your young heart towards your kind, and God will bless you, as he has blessed me. Mercy is always preferable to severity. A want of feeling can only lead to injustice; and if he who solicits our compassion does not merit it, the fault is his, not ours.

Mar. But, my dear father, it is not prudent to commit to such a man as Hardy, an office which puts it in his power to be unjust.

Lord B. You would be right, my son, if I had left to him alone the power of condemning or acquitting. He can at most commit but a slight injury, which it is easy to remedy; and his inconvenience is una-

voidable. My steward gave me a favorable account of the little girl and her mother, when they first came to the village, and informed me that they live with old Margaret, who is a very honest woman. I have in him a man of good understanding, upright, and noble in his sentiments, you know.

Mar. But what if Hardy had beat the little girl, as he threatened ?

Lord B. He would not proceed so far. I have forbidden him, on pain of losing his place, to strike any person, even though he surprise them doing any thing amiss ; and he rigorously follows the orders which I give him.

Mar. Here is Harriet returning with the little girl.

Enter Harriet and Emily.

Mar. [*running with the basket to Emily.*] Here, little girl, is your basket. Not a single ear of the corn has been touched.

Em. O my dear basket ! How much am I obliged to you, my good little master ! [*perceiving Lord B.*] Who is that gentleman ?

Har. This is our good father.

[Running to her father, and jumping up to embrace him.

Mar. O, he is a good father indeed, that I can assure you ; so that you have nothing to fear. Come, I'll introduce you to him. [*Coming forward.*] He has scolded old Hardy well, for treating you as he did.

[Emily advances towards Lord B. and curtsies to him.

Em. I beg pardon, my lord for the liberty—but your lordship's children are so good !

Lord B. [*asi.*] Marcellus was right. Whoever looks on her cannot doubt her innocence. That graceful air, her manner of speaking are proofs of proper education.

Em. [*in a low voice to Harriet.*] Have I made your father angry? He is talking to himself.

Lord B. [*overhearing her.*] No, my dear. If my children have behaved well to you, they have done no more than you appear to merit.

Har. I wish you had seen her mother!

Lord B. Who is your mother, my dear? Why did you come to these parts? and how do you live?

Em. We live—I scarce know how. We live upon little or nothing. We spend the day, and sometimes the night, in needlework and spinning, to get us bread. Old Madge affords my mother lodging; and they sent me to-day into the fields to glean; but, indeed, my first attempt has not turned out well.

Mar. [*in a whisper to Emily.*] Better than you think! my sister will get father's leave, and you shall have ears of corn without gleaning.

Lord B. But where did you live before?

Em. At Richmond, which is a few miles off. Living was dear; so old Margaret persuaded mother to come to her, and offered her free house-room.

Lord B. [*asi.*] If people who are so poor, exercise humanity to each other, what duties have not we to fulfil! [*To Em.*] Is your father living? What is his profession?

Mar. I venture to say he was of high standing

Har. And so do I, since I have seen her mother.

Em. [*confused.*] My father ?—I have none indeed, I never saw him. He died before I was born. Ah ! if he were living now——

Lord B. And do you not know who he was ? What was his name ?

Em. My mother will inform you better than I.

Lord B. Could I speak with her ?

Har. Yes, father, she is coming herself. She only begged a moment's time to prepare herself.

Lord B. And who brought you up ?

Em. My mother entirely, my lord. She taught me to read and write. She instructs me in my religion, and gives me some lessons in drawing.

Lord B. [*aside.*] I have not a doubt remaining. This is a branch of some good family reduced to poverty by misfortune.

Har. Here she comes.

Mar. Is this she ?

Lord B. [*asi.*] I am impatient to clear up this mystery. This child recalls to my mind features well known to me, but whose I cannot recollect.

Enter Mrs. Jennings.

Em. [*running to meet her mother, who appears confused on seeing Lord B.*] Come, mother ! do not be afraid ! this is the father of these two amiable children who showed us so much good nature ; and he is very kind too, as kind as his children.

[Mrs. J. advances, Harriet eagerly takes her hand, and leads her towards her father.

Har. My father knows all.

Mrs. J. May I flatter myself that your lordship has not suspected my little Emily?

Lord B. The sight alone, madam, of you and your daughter is sufficient to convey the most favorable opinion of you both.

Mar. Is her name Emily? It is easy to see, father, she was not born to be a gleaner.

Mrs. J. The laws of necessity are often severe, but, as long as we do nothing dishonorable——

Lord B. Nobody should blush for poverty; it may be found united to every virtue. But may I take the liberty, madam, to ask your name?

Har. Her name is Mrs. Lambert.

Mrs. J. I ought not to disguise my real name from your lordship. I find myself indeed under the necessity of disclosing it to you, in order to justify myself in your lordship's opinion for the state to which you see me reduced. Yet I wish [*looking at the children*] to make this avowal without witnesses; not that I blush for my humble situation, but, if my name were known, I might meet, among the multitude, some ungenerous souls, who would perhaps take a pleasure in mortifying me, because they sometimes see those who are in prosperity behave with the same want of generosity to themselves.

Mar. Well, I shall not listen.

Har. And I shall never mention it. Whoever you are, Emily shall always be my friend.

Lord B. Be assured, madam, I should not inquire into these particulars without being strongly inter

ested in them, and unless I were resolved to make amends for the injustice of fortune.

Mrs.J. I was born of a good family, though little favored by fortune. I passed my youth in London, as companion to a lady of the first rank. Eight years ago, I became acquainted with Mr. Jennings, a lieutenant-colonel in the army, who had come to spend some months in town.

Lord B. [*eagerly.*] Jennings!

Mrs.J. He conceived an affection for me, and his good qualities prejudiced me in his favor. I gave him my hand, and a few days after our marriage we retired to a small estate which he had in Dorsetshire.

Lord B. 'Tis the same! I can trace his features in the face of this child.

Mrs.J. How! my lord?

Lord B. Go on, madam, I pray you.

Mrs.J. I will be as brief as possible. We were beginning to enjoy, in a peaceful retirement, the happiness of a most tender union. But alas! the fatigues of the service had impaired my husband's health, and, a severe illness seizing him, put an end to his life in a few days.

Har. [*to Emily.*] Poor child! you became an orphan very soon.

Em. Ah me! even before I was born.

Mrs.J. This child was born in sorrow. As soon as my husband's brothers, who were hard-hearted, worldly men, saw there was no male heir, they took possession of his property; and as we had delayed from day to day the formal attestations requisite to

put our marriage articles in force, I was obliged to be satisfied with whatever they thought proper to allow for my subsistence and that of my daughter.

Lord B. Their ungenerous avarice gives room to suppose the sum was small, and could not last long.

Mrs.J. It sufficed to maintain me for a few years in Dorsetshire, during which time I continued to flatter myself with the expectation of obtaining a small jointure. But at length, seeing all my hopes frustrated, I took the resolution of returning to London to my former benefactress. On my arrival, I learned that she had died a short time before. No other resource then presented, but to sell what remained of my clothes and jewels, and to work with my own hands for a subsistence; I retired to Richmond to live private and unknown. And there, some time ago, I met a woman whom I had formerly known, and who lives in this village.

Har. That is old Margaret, father.

Mrs.J. She had been servant to the lady whom I have mentioned. My attention to her during a severe illness attached her strongly to me. I explained my situation to her, and she proposed to me to come and live here, where I might enjoy a still more obscure retreat. I am indebted to her for a hospitable residence, and, as she has no relation to perform the last offices for her, she has given me to understand that I shall succeed her in the possession of her little cottage. You see, my lord——

Lord B. 'Tis enough, madam. This generous woman shall not surpass me in gratitude. It gives

me inexpressible joy to repay a debt which I have contracted to your worthy husband!

Mrs.J. How, sir, have you known my husband?

Mar. The father of this little Emily?

Har. My dear little Emily, I see we shall keep you with us. But what is the matter? Do you cry?

Em. It is only for joy.

Lord B. To your husband I owe my life. How happy am I then, in being able to repay that kindness to his wife and child! I served with him in the last war. In a dangerous battle, one of the enemy's horsemen had his sword lifted over me, at a time when I was quite spent with fatigue; so that I must have perished, if my brave colonel had not saved my life, by rushing upon him at the very moment.

Mrs.J. I know him well by this description. He was as brave, as he was generous.

LordE. Some days after, I was sent with a detachment upon a very dangerous expedition. We were surrounded, and forced to yield, after a long resistance. My baggage had been plundered, so that I was both stripped of clothes and money. As soon as Colonel Jennings heard of my situation, he procured me a recommendation to the enemy's general. Through his exertions, I obtained every assistance requisite, whilst under cure for a deep wound I had received. I was more than two years in recovering; and when ordered home, had barely time to pay him a visit of acknowledgement, before I was obliged to embark immediately for the West-Indies. I married there to my advantage; and in conse-

quence returned to England about seven years ago. I was preparing to fly to him, when I heard that he was no more. I little thought that his wife and daughter experienced that reverse of fortune in which I am grieved to find you at present.

Mrs.J. O, God ! by what wonderful ways hast thou conducted me hither !

Ma. [*toEm.*] What, your father saved our father!

Har. How dearly we ought to love you !

Lord B. Come hither, Emily ; you shall find in me the father you have lost. My children too, have occasion for a second mother to replace her whom death has taken from them. The education which you have given your amiable child [*Emily goes close to him and takes his hand*] shows me, madam, how worthy you are to fill so delicate an office. I shall take every necessary precaution that you may not have to dread, a second time, the unforeseen strokes of adversity.—[*To Em. who still holds his hand.*] Yes, my little dear, I will make no difference between you and my own children. You are the living image of your generous father, and are as worthy of my affection, as he was of my gratitude.

Mrs.J. How shall I answer, my lord, to so much kindness ! I have only tears to express my feelings.

Har. [*embracing her.*] My dear new mother ! will you, as well as Emily, always be with us ? You shall see how glad we will be to obey you.

Mar. Yes, and Emily shall be my other sister. She will certainly not go any more to glean.

Mrs. J. My dear little lambs ! with what joy

you fill my heart! Instead of one child, I have now three; and no mother shall equal me in attention and tenderness.—[*To Lord B.*] Will your lordship permit me now to impart these happy tidings to my friend Margaret? Her joy will be great indeed.

Lord B. Nothing can be more just, madam; in the mean time, I will go and order an apartment to be prepared for you at my house.

Har. Father, will you give me leave to go with Emily and my new mother?

Mar. And let me accompany them, father?

Lord B. With pleasure, my dear children. Afterwards you will bring Mrs. Jennings and Emily to our house, without forgetting good old Margaret, whom I invite to come and dine with us.

Har. [*to Emily, who is going to take the basket.*] No, Emily, this is not fit for you to carry. Let the basket remain here.

Em. O, sir! I would not give this basket for any thing in the world. To it I owe my own happiness and my mother's; the happiness of knowing you; and, in short, my life and well being. No, my dear little basket, I shall never blush to carry you.

Har. At least take out the corn, it will be lighter.

Em. No. The corn is mine. For the good old reaper gave it to me, whatever Hardy might say. I will make a present of it to Margaret.

Lord B. She shall not be forgotten next harvest, and shall be certain of bread for life.

Mrs. J. May heaven reward you and your children for these acts of generosity!

FATHERS RECONCILED BY THEIR CHILDREN.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. SEWALL.	THOMAS, *Son of the Village Apothecary.*
CONSTANTINE, *his Son.*	GRACE, *his Sister.*
ALICIA, *his Daughter.*	

The scene lies in a garden, under the windows of Mr. Sewall's house in the country. On one side a summer-house, and, at the bottom of the stage, a tuft of trees.

SCENE I.

Mr. Sewall, Alicia, and Constantine.

Alicia.

BUT, father——

Mr. S. I repeat it. Let neither of you henceforward, under pain of my displeasure, have the least connection with the apothecary's children.

Al. What has made you angry with Mr. Garvey?

Mr. S. Am I obliged to give you an account?

Con. No, certainly. It does not become us to question you. [*To Alicia.*] When father gives his orders, it is our business to obey without reply.

Mr. S. Yes, that is my meaning. Mr. Garvey is an obstinate, disobliging man. Ungrateful to refuse such a matter to me who am his landlord, and from whom he enjoys his fortune and livelihood!

Con. That is scandalous, father; and I don't know why we have been so long connected with the children of such people. If there had been a genteel boy besides in our neighborhood, I should never have spoken a word to Thomas.

Ali. O father! can you hear my brother talk so? Thomas and Grace are such good children; we should be very glad if we were as good as they.

Mr. S. What is it to me whether they be good or bad? I forbid your having any intercourse with them, or else I shall keep you shut up at home.

Con. Let Thomas dare to come sneaking about this garden! I'll give him——

Mr. S. What do you say? I don't intend they shall be ill-treated, or affronted in any manner.

Con. [*confused.*] No, I don't mean that. I only say, that I will not let them come within a hundred yards of us. O, I shall keep a good look out.

Ali. Yet you had so great a friendship for Mr. Garvey! You looked upon him as so honest a man! of so much learning and good sense! You remember very well it was he who taught my brother Latin, and instructed me, merely through friendship, before we had a master.

Mr. S. All that may be; but I forbid another word on the subject. I will have nothing to say to

him, as you must have nothing to say to his children. Dry up those tears, Alicia. Have you so little respect for your father's commands, that it costs you tears to obey them ?

Ali. No, father. But pardon this last token of regard to my playmates. I shall not be less obedient than my brother.

Con. We shall see who will be most dutiful.

Ali. At least you will not insist that I should hate them. It would not be in my power to obey you.

Mr. S. Neither hate them, nor use them ill, but break off all connection with them. This is my order.

Ali. I will conform to your pleasure. But I have one favor to ask of you.

Mr. S. What is it ?

Ali. That I may speak to them once more, and tell them your orders.

Con. For what ? All correspondence is at an end.

Mr. S. Your request is reasonable, and I grant it. You may tell them, at the same time, their father must pay me in three days, or he will repent it.

Ali. Dear father, does Mr. Garvey owe you money?

Mr. S. Do you think I would ask him for what he does not owe me ? But that does not concern you. Only remember to obey me. [*He goes out.*

Ali. Well, brother, is this your friendship for Thomas and Grace ?

Con. Well, sister, is this your obedience to father ?

Ali. You pretend to obedience ! It is hypocrisy ; nothing more. You only flatter him, to wheedle money from him. You love nothing in the world.

Con. Because I do not take pleasure in always disobliging him? Would you have me run after these children now he has forbidden me!

Ali. You little deserved their friendship, if it cost you no more to give it up. But, whenever your expectations from any one are at an end, your good sentiments for them soon vanish.

Con. As if I had any thing to expect from children of that sort!

Ali. What was that case of mother-of-pearl, which you persuaded Grace to give you not a week ago? and those tablets, which you contrived to coax so dexterously from Thomas only yesterday? You have cringed to them a thousand times for nosegays and oranges; and now——

Con. Now I must obey. Truly, the apothecary's children are fine folks to grieve about!

Ali. Yes; and I shall see you, perhaps this evening, in the midst of the dirtiest boys of the town.

Con. I shall not lose much by the exchange.

Ali. And they still less.

Con. I don't care. But here comes Thomas; advise him as a friend not to come too near me.

Ali. If you do not like to see him, you can retire.

Con. I do *not* like to see him, and I *will* stay.

Enter Thomas, carrying a little wooden house, painted blue.

Tho. [*to Alicia.*] O, how glad I am to find you!

Con. Dear Tom, what have you in that little house?

Tho. It is a present which Mr. Billingsley's gamekeeper made me.

Con. And you come to make me a present of it, my dear friend ?

Ali. [*aside.*] The hypocrite !

Tho. It is for Miss Alicia.

Ali. For me ? No, my friend. As it is a present to you, I shall not deprive you of it. Pray what is it ?

Con. [*imperiously.*] Come, I'll see what it is !

[Endeavors to snatch the wooden house from Thomas, who holds it forcibly.

Some ugly bird, I suppose.

Tho. An ugly bird ? no, you are out. Guess, miss ; but I won't keep you in suspense ; it is a squirrel. O, a comical little beast it is ! He always strives to hide himself in your pocket ; then he comes to eat out of your hand, and he runs after you like a spaniel.

[He takes it out of its house, and gives its chain to Alicia.

Don't let it go, though. He must grow tame with you, otherwise he would take a trip to the grove.

Con. [*with a look of envy.*] A fine present indeed ! a squirrel ! he smells like a pole-cat.

Ali. O the charming little creature ! how spritely !

Tho. I wish, master Constantine, I had another to offer you ; but will bring you the first I have. When he is a little used to you, miss, he will play such tricks as will make you die with laughing. He beats a monkey in drollery.

Ali. For that reason, master Tommy, I will not deprive you of it. [*To the squirrel.*] Come, little rogue, go into your house again. You must take it back, friend Thomas.

Con. Yes, don't you hear ? You must take it back.

Tha. How? he is not mine now. You would not disoblige me, miss Alicia? No, I know you would not. [*He runs to the summer-house.*] There, I will leave it on the bench.

Con. [*to Alicia.*] Only dare to take it, and see if father won't make you pay dear for it.

Ali. I'm almost inclined to take it because of your threat. My father has not forbidden me to receive squirrels. I am sorry for poor Tom, that I have nothing to give him in return but a sad farewell.

Con. Well, leave it to me; I will dismiss both him and the squirrel.

Ali. No, do not take that trouble. [*To Thomas, as he returns.*] Once more, my friend, I cannot accept your present. I have such disagreeable news for you, that I do not know——

Con. Yes, Thomas. If you show yourself about our garden, or only look at the walls of our house—

Tho. What! could you, sir, have the heart to hinder me? I thought you had more friendship for me.

Con. Our friendship is broken off, to let you know; and pray do not think——

Ali. I beg you will excuse his ill manners. You do not know, perhaps, that your father has had a quarrel with ours.

Tho. Pardon me, I know it, and it has made me uneasy enough. But I did not think the matter went so far as to break off our friendship. And I should still less have expected it from master Constantine.

Con. Sister, will you send him away immediately, or shall I go and acquaint my father?

Tho. If you were to have any trouble on my account, Miss Alicia——

Ali. Do not fear, my friend; you may stay a while, father will not take it amiss.

Con. We shall see that; I'll open the cause to him.

[He goes out, but returns a moment afterwards, and slips into the summer-house unperceived.

Tho. For heaven's sake, miss Alicia, tell me what I have done to your brother?

Ali. He is a little jealous, in the first place, on account of the squirrel you have given me. Then he thinks he will become a great favorite with *our*

father, by taking part in his quarrel with *yours*. For my father is very angry, and I do not know why.

Tho. Nor I either. I only heard my father say, as he walked about by himself, "I could not think this of Mr. Sewall." He then went to find my mother; and, as my sister was then with her, she must know the cause of the quarrel.

Ali. In the mean time, my father has forbidden us to see or speak to you.

Tho. What! shall I see you no more? shall I not be allowed to speak to you? Ah, how shall I part with you? what will my poor sister do who is so fond of you? O dear! what have we done?

Ali. Comfort yourself, my dear Thomas; we shall still be good friends, and, if we are forbidden to see each other, who will hinder us to think of one another? Thus, for instance; when I play with your squirrel, I shall think of you. I shall always call him by your name. O, I shall love him!

Tho. How happy you make me in thus speaking! I don't know now as I shall be sorry any longer; but here comes my sister. She looks very dull.

Enter Grace.

Ali. [*running to meet Grace and saluting her.*] My dear Grace!

Gra. My good miss Alicia!

[Constantine appears at the bottom of the stage, leading Mr. Sewall privately behind the summer-house.

Tho. [*to Grace.*] You are going to hear disagreeable news.

Gra. And I bring you no better. My father and mother are in such trouble——

Tho. Did I not tell you so? Well, what passed?

Gra. Your father may be angry with ours, but certainly his demand is somewhat unreasonable.

Ali. Unreasonable? that cannot be. Ah! if it were, I should still have hopes of persuading him. Tell me, however, the cause of the quarrel.

Gra. You know that handsome tuft of trees which is behind your garden?

Ali. O yes; where we used to go of evenings to hear the nightingales sing. A charming little grove!

Gra. You know too, that this little grove was given to my father by old Mr. Drury, in return for his services to him during his lifetime.

Ali. Well?

Gra. Mr. Sewall wants it.

Ali. What, my father?

Tho. What, our pretty little grove?

Gra. My father told him, that he should be very happy to oblige him; that he should never forget how much he and his family were indebted to him; but that his friend had desired him, on his death-bed, never to part with this grove, that it might always serve to keep him in his memory.

Ali. With all the respect which I owe my father, I cannot deny, he is in the wrong in this. But he would not have it for nothing? That is not his way of thinking.

Gra. O dear, no. He means to pay my father for it, and even perhaps more than it is worth.

Tho. And what does he wish to do with it? does he not enjoy the prospect as well as we?

Gra. He wants to cut down all those fine trees.

Ali. and Tho. Cut them down?

Gra. You know the hill which is behind the grove? He says that will make a fine prospect. Now the grove is at the foot of the hill; so, to have the prospect they must cut down the grove.

Ali. Now I see why father brought an architect from town, who talks to him about grottoes and bridges and chinese temples. My father dreams of nothing but improvements. He has a plan of them continually in his hands, and talks of them a hundred times a day, even to me. And I who made myself so happy in the expectation of seeing all those fine things! Now I'll have nothing to do with them. Let your father keep his grove.

Tho. What would become of the birds that chirp so sweetly on those venerable trees, and who build their nests there, because nobody disturbs them, and because we carry them food there?

Gra. And the refreshing coolness which we breathed there in the hot summer days!

Ali. And the echo that used to answer us from the hill when we sung!

Gra. The prospect of a grove in full leaf, is, I believe, as good as that of a hill.

Ali. And what occasion has my father for a new prospect? he has so many others on every side.

Tho. I should think that one of my own limbs was lopp'd off at every stroke of the hatchet.

Ali. No. Your father must not deprive himself of his grove.

Gra. Must not? ah, he cannot keep it long.

Ali. Why not? my father will never take it from him by force, I suppose! He has not the power.

Tho. But, if he be angry with us, and forbid you to see us, I would rather give him ten groves like that.

Gra. And don't you think that I would too? what should I do there without you, Alicia? I should never have any desire to go into it.

Ali. My dear Grace, we used to be so happy in it. You remember we used to go there in the evening, and tell all that had happened to us in the day?

Gra. Yes; each brought her work. You sewed and I knit. Thomas brought us flowers, and we left off work to make nosegays. You gave me yours and I gave you mine. That was enough to make us think of each other the whole of the next day.

Tho. And now that's all over, never to return!

Ali. No, we shall have no more such delightful moments. It will make me grow sick, and then my father will be sorry, and I will tell him that if he would restore me to health, he must allow me to see my little friends again.

[They all three embrace and weep.

Gra. But, in the meantime, the grove will be cut down; it certainly must.

Ali. And why?

Gra. Ah, Alicia, I have not told you all. About

ten years ago, Mr. Sewall lent my father fifty pounds to set him up; and you know that my father has never yet been able to pay him.

Ali. [*asi.*] Ah, this was the debt father mentioned.

Gra. If we keep the grove, Mr. Sewall must have his fifty pounds; and my father knows not how to raise the money. Among all his friends, there is none except your father who could furnish him with so great a sum; and he is the very person who demands it.

Ali. [*taking both their hands.*] O, if there be nothing except that, I can settle it.

Gra. Settle it?

Tho. You, Miss?

Ali. [*with joy in her countenance.*] Do you promise not to betray me?

Gra. I betray you?

Tho. Ah, can you doubt that we will promise?

Ali. Well then, hear me. You know—I can never think of it without being moved—You know how fond my mother was of me. In her last illness, when I happened once to be alone with her, she called me to her bed-side, and, kissing me, she took a purse from under her pillow, 'Here, my dear Alicia,' said she, 'take this. I forbid you to let any one know that I have given it to you. Keep it for important occasions. You have a kind heart, and a good understanding for your age—(it was mother however who said this)—You will know how to dispose of it worthily. Your father has a noble and generous soul, but is somewhat passionate and vin-

dictive. You may perhaps spare him occasions of vexation and sorrow. On so extensive an estate as ours, there must be many poor people who have suffered unmerited losses; such, you may assist in secret. You may also repay such services as may be done you, without always applying to your father. It is through your hands that I have, for the two last years distributed assistance. I hope you have acquired sufficient discernment to distinguish those who have a claim to pity. I doubt not that you will make the best use of this little sum, which I intrust to your hands, for the benefit of honesty in distress. I already imagine that I have done the good that you shall do; and it is the best means by which I can be present to your memory.' My mother was so exhausted she could say no more; but I shall remember her dying injunction as long as I live.

Gra. [*wiping her eyes.*] Excellent lady!

Tho. My father and mother never speak of her but with tears.

Ali. My mother had a great friendship for them too. She told me at her death always to look upon Mr. Garvey as one of my best friends, and to follow implicitly his sensible advice. You see, therefore, I have obligations to you. Happy am I in honoring my mother's memory; in satisfying my own gratitude; in saving my father from an act of injustice; in sparing him the sorrow he would feel for it; in preserving every thing; the charming little tuft of trees; our own friendship; the pleasure of seeing each other as before——

Gra. [*throwing her arms round her neck.*] O my dear Alicia !

Tho. [*taking her hand.*] My father will bless you in his heart, but he will never take your money.

Ali. Certainly he will take it if I request him. Nobody in the world shall know any thing of it. Stay here, my dear friends ; I will go for it.

Tho. I will not, however, take charge of it.

Ali. You shall, my dear Grace. And, Thomas, if you hinder her, take notice I do not accept your squirrel ; I shall obey my father rigorously, and never look at you again ; and never go either to your house, or into the grove again.

Gra. Well, miss, if you speak in this manner——

Ali. [*stopping her.*] You don't know what you say. I won't even hear you. Stay for me, I shall soon return. If I be not interrupted, I shall write a few lines to your father. In case I cannot join you again, I will put the purse near the summer-house ; there, under that large stone. Mark the place well now ; do you hear ?

Gra. I am sure that my father will send me back with your money.

Ali. Let him beware of that. And you will not know where to find me ; for, alas, it is perhaps the last time that we are allowed to converse together.

Gra. Ah, miss Alicia, what cruel words !

Ali. I must obey my father. But we are neighbors ; we are not forbid to look at each other ; and, whenever our eyes can meet unobserved——

Gra. O, mine shall take care to seek yours, and to tell them that I shall never forget to love you.

Tho. Who will hinder us to be in your way when you go out to walk? and then——

Ali. You are right. A smile, or a side-look can pass without being seen. Come, take comfort; all will go well. But where is the squirrel? As I am going to my room, I will carry it up.

Tho. Stop a moment; I will go for his house, and carry it for you as far as the door.

[Runs to the summer-house.

Ali. Good by, my dear Grace.

Gra. Ah, miss Alicia, I cannot believe that it is to be forever.

Tho. [*returning with the squirrel's house empty.*] Bless me; the squirrel is not here.

Ali. What! my squirrel gone? O dear, Thomas.

Tho. Somebody must have opened the door, for I remember to have shut it.

Ali. It can be none but my brother. He was jealous that you made me a present of it; and, while we were speaking here, he slipped into the summer-house, and opened his little door.

Tho. If he only carried away the squirrel to play with a little!——

Ali. I know him better than you do, he has let him run away.

Tho. Well, stay a moment; he can't be far off. If I can discover him on some tree, I need only show him a nut to make him come down immediately. I will go and hunt for him. [*Goes out.*

Ali. [*to Tho.*] I wish you success in the chace, my dear friend. [*To Gra.*] Poor Thomas! I pity him, he was so happy in making me that present!

Gra. That is true indeed. He never was easy till he brought it to you.

Ali. I must leave you, my dear Grace. I will take the terrace walk; it leads to the house; and do you go out by the little door of the garden, and slip round along the wall. You need only stand under my window, without taking notice of anything. I will throw you the purse with a letter. If my father is not in the way, I will bring them to you myself.

Gra. O my dear generous friend, what good-nature! [*They go out, different ways.*

SCENE II.

Mr. Sewall, Constantine.

Con. Well, father, was I wrong? you see what pains my sister takes to obey you.

Mr. S. And what is this story of a squirrel?

Con. I did not tell it to you while we were concealed, because they would have heard me. But the affair is this: The dear friend Thomas made a present of the squirrel to the dear friend Alicia. The dear friend Alicia received this ugly little beast with so much pleasure, that she calls it her dear friend Tommy. But I have managed that she shall not have much amusement with it.

Mr. S. How so?

Con. They put the squirrel's little house on the

summer-house bench. I went in while they were taking a tender farewell, opened the little door took the squirrel out, and let him loose among the trees. I saw him soon climb up a tree, and jump from branch to branch. They will be pretty cunning if they ever catch him again.

Mr. S. Then, sir, you have done a very mean and despicable action. Did I not forbid you to molest these poor children? and you knew very well the trouble you were going to cause your sister.

Con. As she disobeyed you, did she not deserve to be punished?

Mr. S. Is it to you that the right of punishment belongs? Run and tell the gardener and his people to look for the squirrel and bring it to me.

Con. But, father, you forbade my sister any connection with Mr. Garvey's children; and will you suffer her to receive a present from them?

Mr. S. Was Thomas informed of my intentions when he brought the squirrel?

Con. At least Alicia knew them; and did not she disobey you?

Mr. S. It belonged to me to judge. She certainly would have showed me the present she received; and, if I thought proper, I should have ordered her to return it. But again I say, run and let this squirrel be found, or you shall answer for it.

Con. But, father, you have heard them talk finely. My sister has money unknown to you, and she gives it to Mr. Garvey to pay you. Had I not better go

and watch Grace, to surprise her when she receives the purse, and bring it to you ?

Mr. S. Dare not to do it. You know my orders. Obey.

Con. [*murmuring.*] I thought that I had done such fine things ! [*He goes out.*

Mr. S. [*musing.*] Yes, I see I have suffered my passions to carry me too far. What a pattern of friendship, gratitude, and generosity, do these children show ! It is true, I had forbidden Alicia ——But should I have forbidden her ? Ought I to suppress those sentiments in her heart, to which I myself had given birth ? Could I deprive her of the only happiness which she enjoys in this solitude ? the greatest happiness of human life, an amiable and virtuous society with children of her own age ? a blessing, the loss of which I could not compensate with all my fortune ; and for what reason ? To satisfy an empty whim. My dear Alicia, neither those grottoes, those bridges, those chinese temples, nor all those ornaments with which I meant to embellish my garden ; nothing, in fact, could have made you forget the unadorned grove where friendship found so safe a retreat. What a lesson is this to me ! But for you, I was about to lose a valuable friendship. You save me from injustice and remorse. And your noble conduct makes me feel the unworthiness of your brother. Ill-natured boy ! in what an odious light has he shown himself ! But let me banish this mortifying

idea from my mind. I am impatient to know if Mr Garvey thinks as generously as his children. The part which he takes will determine my happiness. I have either lost a friend undeserving of my attachment, or I shall now find one worthy my regard.

[Alicia crosses the bottom of the stage on tiptoe. Mr. Sewall perceives her, and calls 'Alicia!' She goes on. Mr. Sewall calls a second time,]

Alicia! come hither!

Enter Alicia.

Mr. S. Where were you going? why did you strive to avoid me?

Ali. [*confused.*] Because—I was afraid to disturb you, father.

Mr. S. You are going perhaps to seek the squirrel which Thomas gave you as a present.

Ali. It is true he gave me one. I suppose Constantine told you.

Mr. S. You did not receive it, I presume?

Ali. I! no—O yes, how could I avoid it? Poor Tommy! he was in such joy when he offered it.

Mr. S. You must return it.

Ali. Yes, father, if I had it; but it has run away.

Mr. S. Is this true, Alicia?

Ali. Yes, sir, I assure you. I can show you his house; it is empty.

Mr. S. Who could have let it out? This was a trick of Constantine.

Ali. No, father. Do not accuse my brother of it. The door must have been ill fastened, so the prisoner

escaped. But Tommy is in pursuit of him, and, if he catch him again, he will bring him back to me.

Mr. S. You mean then to have a second conversation with him? What have you to say to him? Have you not told him my resolution? And have you not taken leave of him?

Ali. Yes, father; but——O, I was so sorry! I shall not easily comfort myself.

Mr. S. You find then a difficulty in obeying me?

Ali. O, it is not that; don't imagine it. But could you love me still, could you own me for your child, if I were to tell you that this quarrel does not grieve me? What would you think of me, what would my friends think, if I withdrew my heart from them at once, without feeling the least concern?

Mr. S. Is the offence offered me by their father so indifferent to you, that you take no part in it?

Ali. I do take a part in it, and I would give any thing in the world that you had full satisfaction.

Mr. S. You know then what I ask of him, and what he refuses me?

Ali. I know——Ah, father, why do you ask me?

Mr. S. Because I would know if Mr. Garvey's children are acquainted with the affair, and have intrusted it to you.

Ali. Yes, they told me all. Don't be angry, father!

Mr. S. Well, what do you think of my demand? Does it appear unreasonable? Have I not a right to expect from Mr. Garvey, in return for all my kindness, a slight compliment, and for which I would repay him a hundred-fold?

Ali. Dear father, I am only a child; how can I decide among grown people?

Mr. S. Consult your own heart. I would know what it says.

Ali. Pray excuse me. My heart perhaps might say something which would displease you.

Mr. S. I understand. It would judge, no doubt, that I am in the wrong.

Ali. Ah, now you are going to be angry.

Mr. S. Only speak; you will see.

Ali. I would not offend you on any account.

Mr. S. You will not; only tell me freely what you think.

Ali. Well then, I think you are right, and Mr. Garvey too.

Mr. S. Both of us right? O, you little flatterer, that is impossible. One of us must be right, and the other wrong.

Ali. Pardon me; I spoke it as I think. You have done Mr. Garvey great kindnesses, and have a right to expect from him, in acknowledgement, a matter which you have so much at heart; and he is right in refusing it to you, because he has reasons for not giving it up.

Mr. S. But are his reasons just, or ill-founded?

Ali. It is not for me to be the judge of them. You look upon it as a duty, in gratitude, for him to give up his little grove; and he looks upon the keeping of it to be a duty of gratitude. You would cut it down, to make a fine prospect; he thinks it an agreeable shady retreat for his children. You

are his landlord, and have power; he has nothing but the prayers and tears of his family.

Mr. S. Enough of this; you are too dangerous an advocate. Well, let him pay me the fifty pounds which I lent him, and he may keep his grove.

Ali. Then it will be force——

Mr. S. That will show which is right, eigh?

Ali. No, father, I only meant—O, I do not know what I would say. But the fifty pounds—where can he get them?

Mr. S. If you don't know, neither do I. However, if he applied to you——

Ali. [*embracing her father.*] O, I cannot conceal it any longer from you. And, though you punish me for it—I have deserved your anger—I have——

Mr. S. Come, come, let me go! What does all this mean, Alicia?

Enter Constantine forcing in Grace.

Con. Ah, father, I have her, I have her. She has a letter; I suppose for my sister. Come, give it me, give it me, or I will search you. Yes, yes, she had it in her hand as she slipped along the yew-hedge.

Mr. S. No violence, Constantine. [*To Grace*] Do you wish any one here, child?

Gra. [*confused.*] No—yes, sir, I was looking for—

Mr. S. Why so frightened? Whom do you want?

Gra. Miss Alicia.

Con. But you know, Grace, that father has forbidden her to speak to you.

Mr. S. [*to Con.*] I request you to be silent. [*To Gra.*] And what is this letter in question?

Gra. It is nothing—nothing—[*looking sorrowfully at Ali.*] Ah, miss Alicia, will you forgive me?

Ali. My dear Grace, we must now hide nothing from my father.

Con. [*to Mr. S.*] How, sir? they speak to each other before your face. Is that obedience?

Mr. S. Will you be silent? Well, Grace, may I not know?——

Gra. Since I must tell you, sir, the truth is, my father has written a letter to miss Alicia, thanking her for her kindness.

[She offers the letter to Alicia; Constantine seizes it.

Con. O father! it is full of money. [*To Alicia*] Ah! you will be paid now.

Ali. I was going to confess the whole to you, father, when Grace and my brother interrupted us. I submit to my punishment.

Mr. S. [*opens the letter and reads*]

'Most worthy Miss:

'I should not be deserving of your generous intentions in my favor, if I were base enough to lead you into the slightest act of deceit, by accepting the money which you offer me to pay your father. No, my dear miss, I am his debtor, and shall have the misfortune to continue so, until I can acquit my debt by my own resources. I am unhappy in not being able on this occasion to meet your father's wishes so cheerfully as I would on any other. If Mr. Sewall, without mentioning it to me, had pursued the course which his power enables him to use, I should not have expostulated. He may assure

himself, that I should never have formed in my own mind a single complaint against him. At least I should not have to reproach myself with violating the sacred promise which I have passed. Let him know these sentiments, my worthy little friend. His friendship and yours are more valuable to me than all the possessions in the world. Continue still in the same generous disposition towards me and my children. I have the honor to be, &c.'

[Mr. Sewall, without shutting the letter, looks at Alicia.

Ali. [*running to him.*] Now, father, you shall know how this money came into my hands, and forgive me for not owning it to you before !——

Mr. S. [*kissing her.*] I know the whole, my dear Alicia. I heard your conversation. I am delighted with the nobleness and generosity of your sentiments. I do not blush to confess, that perhaps, except for you, I was about to commit an action that would have made me unhappy all my life. Here is your money. Make that noble use of it which your excellent mother enjoined you. Do not fear that I shall ever suffer it to be exhausted by your bounty. Your little grove shall remain, my dear children, and friendship shall unite you still.

Ali. [*taking his hand.*] O father ! I now owe you a second life.

Gra. [*taking his other hand.*] O sir, what goodness ! Ah ! how my father——

Mr. S. Tell him, my dear Grace, that I request him to take his note again ; that I have a small alteration to make in it, of which I will speak to him.

Con. How ? father, you——

Mr. S. Silence your ill-natured tongue. You have to-day given me proofs of a very bad heart.

Con. I have only obeyed you. Must not children obey their parents ?

Mr. S. Without doubt, they must. But, when the commands of their parents are unjust, they must then first obey their duty and their Maker. If your heart did not tell you that mine yielded too much to passion, I have no further hopes of you. Observe how Alicia has acted !

Con. But mother did not leave me any money at my own disposal.

Mr. S. Because she foresaw the improper use you might make of it. And further, had you no words of comfort for your little friends, and for a man who once had the care of your education ? But what has become of the squirrel ? have you given orders to find him ?

Con. I could see no one in the garden.

[Thomas enters, running, and out of breath. He holds the squirrel in one hand, the other is wrapped in a handkerchief, stained with blood.]

Tho. Joy ! joy ! here he is ! I have found him, here he is !

[Perceiving Mr. Sewall, he stops short.

Ali. [*running to him,*] O, my good Tommy. [*she takes the squirrel.*] My pretty little Tommy, have I found you ? O, you shall never escape from me again. Come, sir, march into your house once more.

[Shuts him in his house, and carries him into the summer-house.

Mr. S. What is the matter with your hand, my dear Tom? I think I see blood upon your handkerchief.

Tho. [*with surprise and joy.*] My dear Tom? Miss, do you hear that?

Ali. Yes, child, all is now reconciled.

Gra. And we are friends forever.

[Thomas jumps for joy, and bows to Mr. Sewall. Grace takes her brother's hand and looks at it with concern.

Have you hurt yourself? Let me see.

Ali. And on my account too?

Tho. It is a trifle. It was done by a branch that broke with the spring I made to jump after the runaway. I tore my hand a little; but I would have left an arm behind, rather than not bring back the squirrel to Miss Alicia.

Ali. Ah, how good-natured! Father, you must have it dressed. Nurse has an excellent salve.

Mr. S. That care shall be yours. Come, children, follow me. I will have a little entertainment prepared for you to-day, at my house, and I will go myself, and invite your parents to come and partake of it. I have been your scholar this day and I see, by your example, that good children may always give useful lessons to their parents.

THE FIRE BY NIGHT.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. AND MRS. VERNON.	BRIDGET, *his Wife.*
ADRIAN, *their Son.*	HODGE, *their Son.*
CONSTANCE, *their Daughter.*	PHEBE, *their Daughter*
MEADOWS, *a Farmer.*	GODFREY, *Mr. V.'s Groom.*

SCENE,—*The entrance of a village, in the environs of London, in a part of which, contiguous to the fields, appears a fire On one side is a farm-house with a pump, and, on the other side, a hill.*

SCENE I.

Adrian, running by a path that conducts round the hill; his clothes and hair out of order. He looks back, and sees the fire bursting forth with redoubled fury.

Adrian.

HEAVEN! O heaven! all burning still: what volumes of thick smoke and flames! What's now become of my father, mother, and sister? Am I an unhappy orphan? Heaven take pity on me, and let them be

safe ; for they are more to me than all the world beside—Without them, what should I do ?

[Oppressed with grief and weariness, he leans against a tree. The farm-house door now opens, and little Hodge, who has his breakfast in his hand, comes out.]

Hod. [*without observing Adrian.*] So then, this fire does not stop ? What could possess my father to go poking with his horses right into the middle of it ! But the sun's now rising. He'll soon be back. I'll sit down here, and wait till he returns.

[He goes to sit down by the tree, and sees little Adrian.

Hey ! hey ! who's here ? a fine young gentleman ! What brings you out so early, my pretty master ?

Adr. Ah, my little friend, I neither know at present where I am, nor whither I am going.

Hod. How! perhaps you live in town? and very likely where the fire is.

Adr. Yes, indeed, I have escaped, I cannot well tell you in what manner.

Hod. Is your house in flames?

Adr. It was in our street the fire broke out; I was in bed, and sleeping very soundly. My father ran up to snatch me out of bed; the servant dressed me in a hurry, and one carried me directly through the fire, which blazed all around us as we went forward.

Hod. Poor dear little fellow!

[Some one from the house cries out, 'Hodge! Hodge!' but Hodge is listening to Adrian with so much attention that he does not hear it.]

Enter Mrs. Bridget and Phebe.

Bri. [*to Phebe at the entrance.*] I hope he has not gone away to see the fire. I've cause enough already to tremble for his father's danger.

Phe. No, no, mother; here he is. Ah! he's speaking to a little gentleman.

Bri. [*to Hodge.*] Why didn't you answer when I called you?

Hod. Have you been calling me? I didn't hear you. I was listening to this poor boy here.

Brid. Poor! What has happened to him?

Hod. He was like to have been burnt alive. His house was all in flames, he tells me, when they got him out

Bri. How pale the poor child is! And how did they contrive to save you, my little master?

Adr. Our helper was bid to take me to a village where I had been nursed, so he put me on his shoulders; but the firemen stopped him in the street, wanting hands to work. I fell to crying, when I saw myself alone, on which a good woman took me by the hand, and led me out of town, directing me to walk straight forward, till I saw a village; so I followed her advice, and here I am.

Bri. And can you tell me your nurse's name?

Adr. No, not now; but I can recollect I used to call my little foster-sister, Phebe.

Phe. [*earnestly.*] If this little boy should be Adrian, mother?

Adr. Yes, yes, that's my name.

Bri. What, Adrian, Mr. Vernon's son?

Adr. O, my dear good nurse! I recollect you now. And this is Phebe, and this is Hodge.

[They embrace each other.

Bri. [*kissing Adrian.*] How happy am I now! I thought of nothing but my poor dear little Adrian, since this fire began. My husband's gone to give you all the assistance he can. But how tall he's grown! Should you have recollected him? I think not, Phebe.

Phe. Not immediately, indeed; but, when I saw him first, methought I felt my heart beat toward him. It is a long time since we were last together.

Adr. I have been a great way off, at school, and came home only three days since, to spend the

holidays. Had I remained, I should, at least for the present, have known nothing of this day's misfortune. O, father! mother! O sister!

Bri. Poor dear child! there's no cause to make yourself uneasy. On the first alarm of fire, so near your quarter of the town, my husband sat out, to see if he could be of any use. I know him. Your father, mother, and sister will be safe, if mortal man can save them. But, my lovely Adrian, you have been up and running these two hours at least, and must be hungry. Will you eat a little?

Hod. Look ye, master, here's a Yorkshire cake and butter. Take it!

Adr. Master! You used to call me Adrian, and not master.

Hod. [*embracing him.*] Well then, Adrian, take my breakfast.

Phe. Or stay, Adrian, you must surely be dry as well as hungry, I'll go fetch my milk-porridge. I was putting in the bread——

Adr. No, no, my good friends. I can't have any stomach, till I see my dear father, mother, and sister. I'll return and seek them.

Bri. Do you think of what your saying? Run into the flames!

Ad. I left them in the flames; but it was against my will. I did not like to part with them; but my father will have it so; he in an angry tone bid Godfrey pay no heed to my resistance. I was forced to yield, for fear of putting him into a passion

I cannot hold out any longer, but, whatever be the danger, must go back to find if they are in safety.

Bri. I can't let you go, that's certain. Come into the house with us.

Ad. You then have a house. I, alas! have none.

Bri. And is not our house yours? I fed you with my milk, and can't surely deny you bread. [*She forces him in, and says to Hodge*] Take care, and stay you here, that you may see your father the sooner, and let us know of his coming. But don't run to see the fire. Remember I forbid you that.

[Ex. Adrian, Bridget, and Phebe.

Hodge [*alone.*] And yet I've half a mind to do so. What a charming bonfire it must make! I can't see clearly, but I think that steeple's down that had the golden dragon on the top. There's many a poor soul burnt out of house and home. I pity them, and yet they must not hinder me from finishing my breakfast.—[*To Phebe, re-entering with a tumbler.*] Well now, sister, you're a dear good girl, indeed, to bring me drink so kindly.

Phe. O, 'tis not for you. I've come to get a glass of water for poor Adrian. He'll have neither milk, nor ale, nor wine. "My dear father, mother, and sister, (says he) very likely, are at present hungry and thirsty, and shall I have such nice things? No, no indeed; let me have nothing but a little water; that will serve me well enough, and especially as I am so thirsty."

Hod. I must own however that it's something comical, that Adrian should refuse a drop of any

thing that's good, because he can't get any tidings of his parents.

Phe. O, I know you well enough! Your sister might be burnt alive, and you not eat a mouthful less on that account. For my part I should be like Adrian. I should hardly think of eating, if our house were on fire, and no one could tell me what had happened to my father, mother, or even brother.

Hod. No, nor I—provided I were not hungry.

Phe. Can one be hungry in such a case? Look, Hodge, I've not the least degree of appetite. To see poor Adrian weep and take on so, has made me quite forget my hunger.

Hod. So that you won't eat your milk-porridge!

Phe. What, you want it, after having swallowed your own breakfast, with Yorkshire cake into the bargain!

Hod. No; I'd only take your breakfast, that, if neither you nor Adrian wished to have it, nothing might be lost; that's all. But let me have the tumbler; I've not drank myself.

Phe. [*giving him the tumbler.*] Make haste. Adrian's very thirsty.

Hod. [*after drinking.*] Stay, I'll fill it for him.

Phe. Without rinsing it?

Hod. Do you suppose I've poison in my mouth?

Phe. Very proper, truly, with the crumbs about the rim! I'll rinse it out myself. Young gentlemen are used to cleanliness, and I would wish to let him see as much propriety and neatness in our

cottage as at home. [*She rinses the tumbler, fills it, and goes out.*]

Hod. [*alone.*] So, there's my breakfast done. Suppose now I should run to town to see the fire? I shan't be missed, if I set out, stay there half an hour or so, and then come back; 'tis nothing but a good sound scolding from mother. I'll however go a little way, and then determine. It is not more than twelve or thirteen minutes' run before I'm there. Come, come; faint heart, the proverb tells us, never won fair lady.

[He sets off, but meets his father.

Enter Meadows, with a large trunk upon his shoulders, tired, and out of breath.

Hod. What, you've come back, father! I was going a little way to meet you.

Mea. [*with anxiety.*] Were you? And is Adrian here?

Hod. Yes; he arrived not long ago.

Mea. [*putting down the trunk.*] Thank God, then the whole family are safe! [*He sits down upon the trunk.*] Let me take breath a little.

Hod. Won't you go in, father?

Mea. No, no; I'll remain here in the open air, till I'm recovered a little. Go, and tell your mother that I'm returned. [*Ex. Hodge.*

Enter Bridget, Adrian, Hodge, and Phebe.

Bri. [*running from the farm-house, and embracing Meadows.*] Ah, my dear! What joy to see you back safe!

Mea. My life! But Adrian, pray where is he? Let me see him.

Ad. [*running up.*] Here I am. Here, here, father! [*looking round about.*] But what, are you alone? Where's my father, mother, and little sister?

Mea. Safe, my child; quite safe. Embrace me!

Adr. [*jumping up into his arms.*] O what joy!

Bri. We have all been in very great perplexity. Our neighbors have already come back.

Mea. They had not their benefactor to preserve as I had.

Bri. But, dear Thomas, is the fire out, and all the mischief over?

Mea. Over, Bridget! the whole street is in flames. If you could only see the ruins, and the multitude of people! Women with their hair about their ears, running to and fro, and calling out for their husbands and poor children! to which, add the sound of bells, the noise of carts and engines, with the crush of houses when the timbers are burnt through, the frightened horses, and the throng of people driving full against you. I can't tell you how I made my way amid the flames that crossed before me, and the burning beams that really seemed every moment to fall down to crush me.

Bri. Bless us! you make my blood run cold!

Phe. See, see, mother, how his hair and eyebrows are all singed!

Mea. And see my arm too. But why should I complain? Could I only get away with life, I should not have mattered losing a limb for Mr. Vernon.

Bri. How, my dear ! a limb ?

Mea. What, wife, to save our benefactor ! - Was it not through his means we both came together ? Are we not indebted to his generosity, not only for this farm, but every thing we have ? And, what's still more, my jewel, was it not your milk that reared his weakly child, now strong and hearty ? [*Adrian clings to Bridget.*] Did I say I should have hesitated to lose a limb for Mr. Vernon ?—I say more : I would have given my life to save him.

Bri. You have been able to assist him then ?

Mea. Yes, I have to boast of that happiness. He, his lady, and his daughter, had scarcely got out of their house, as they supposed in safety, when a half-burnt beam fell down into the street before them. Happily, I was not ten yards off; the people fancied they were crushed beneath its weight, and ran away. I heard their cries, came back, and, rushing through the burning ruins, brought them off. I had already saved this trunk you see before you, and my cart is loaded with a great part of their most valuable furniture.

Adr. Be assured, my father will most richly recompense you.

Mea. I am already recompensed, my dear little friend ! Your father did not very likely think of such service at my hands, and I have saved him. In that thought, I am much better paid than in receiving any recompense. Before long, he will doubtless be here, and all his family and people.

Adr. What, shall I see them quickly ?

Mea. Yes, my Adrian. But run, wife, and make a little preparation to receive them; let some ale be drawn, and have the cows milked instantly. Air sheets to put on all the beds too; and as for us, we'll take our lodging in the barn.

Bri. Be it so. I'll play my part, I warrant you. [*Goes out.*

SCENE II.

Meadows, Adrian, Hodge, and Phebe.

Mea. And I'll go put the hay up in some kind of order in the barn, and make a little room for those who may come hither and require some shelter. All the fields, alas, are covered with them! I imagine I still see them! Some, struck speechless, gaze with absolute insensibility, while they behold their houses burning, or else fall to the ground through fatigue and fright; others run along like madmen, wringing their hands, or pulling out their hair; and, uttering pitiful cries, attempt to force their passage through a line of soldiers, who with bayonets keep them off, that they may save the sufferers' property from being plundered.

Phe. O my poor dear Adrian! had you been there, they would have trodden you under foot.

Mea. As soon as they bring back my horses, I'll go out again, and take up all the children, women, and old men I meet with. Had I been the poorest person in the village, this misfortune would have rendered me the richest; since the unhappy, whom I shall succour, will belong to me.

[He stoops to take up the trunk.

Hod. Dear father, let me help you.

Mea. No, no; have a care; 'tis far too heavy for your strength. Go rather and bid Humphreys heat the oven, and put all our kitchen things in order; and let Carter know that I want some flour sent in. These miserable people, who are burnt out of their habitations, shall at least find wherewithal to satisfy their wants! Thank God! I am not so poor, that any one, applying to my charity, should die for want of food. If I'd nothing, I'd give them my last bit of bread. [*He and Hodge go out.*

Phe. O *that* I'd share with you too, Adrian. Who, alas! who would have supposed that I should have ever seen you in your present situation!

Adr. Who, indeed, my dearest Phebe! for it is very hard in one night to lose every thing.

Phe. Be comforted, my dear friend; for don't you recollect, how happy we were once together here, when we were less a great deal than at present? Well, we'll be again as happy with each other. Do you fear you can want any thing, as long as I have any thing to give you?

Adr. [*taking Phebe by the hand.*] No, I don't indeed; but then I thought it would have been my part to make you happy, get you a good husband, as father has often said in joke, and take care of your children, like my own.

Phe. Well, now I must contrive to do all this myself; and when we love each other, it is exactly the same thing. I'll get you all the finest flowers I can in our garden, and whatever fruit I'm al-

lowed to gather. You shall also have my bed, and I'll sleep all night long on the floor beside you.

Adr. [*embracing her.*] O my dear, dear Phebe, how I ought to love you!

Phe. You shall see what care I'll take of Constance too. I'll be always with you both. We drank, I need not tell you, the same milk; and is not that as if you were my brother, pray, and I your sister?

Adr. Yes, and you shall always be my sister, and I do not know which I shall henceforward be most fond of, you or Constance. I'll present you to father, that you may be his daughter; but when, think you, will he come?

Phe. Why make yourself uneasy? you've been told he is safe.

Adr. But my father is just like yours; and who can tell but he'll go back and get into the flames to save some friend or other? I must therefore be uneasy till I see him again. But hark! don't I hear a footstep on the other side of the hill? If it were only he!

Enter Godfrey.

Adr. Ah, Godfrey!

Godf. Ah, my little master! you are safe then?

Adr. Truly there's great need to talk about my safety: Where's father, mother, and Constance? Are they with you?

Godf. [*not knowing what to say.*] With me?

Adr. Yes, you surely have not left them behind?

Godf. Behind! [*turning about*] they're not behind me.

Adr. Then they have not come with you?

Godf. Unless they are here, I don't know where they are.

Adr. [*impatiently.*] You don't come here to seek them, do you?

Godf. [*in confusion.*] Don't be frightened, my dear little master. Are they not come hither?

Phe. None but Adrian.

Adr. He's confounded, and has some bad news to tell me! They are lost, after all good Meadows' pains to save them!

Godf. Hear me. There's no cause, at least I hope so, to alarm yourself. About an hour or forty minutes after they had forced me from you to assist the sufferers, I found means to get into the crowd. Dear master Adrian, don't however fright yourself; but so it is indeed. I ran about the ruins to discover where my master was, but could not come at any tidings of him; no, nor yet my mistress, nor miss Constance. I inquired of every one I met, if they had heard of such a family; but was constantly answered, no.

Adr. O heaven! take pity on me! dear father, mother, and Constance, where, where are you? perished, doubtless!

Godf. I've not told you all yet; but pray don't be frightened. The worst part of the affair comes now.

Ad. What is it? Why don't you tell me, Godfrey?

Godf. How, in heaven's name, would you have

me tell you, if you let yourself be frightened in this manner?

Adr. Speak! pray, Godfrey, speak!

Godf. Well, then, the rumor was as follows, that a gentleman, a lady, and a little girl, were crushed to death, when they were just got out of doors, and thought themselves in safety.

[Adrian swoons away.

Phe. Help! help! help! Come here to our assistance, some one! Adrian's dying.

[She falls down by him.

Godf. But what ails him? I said this was but a report; and then, they could not tell me who it was. It may be nothing, after all.

Phe. Why, how you talk! his fright, at what you mentioned, overcame him, and he quite forgets that my father preserved them.

Godf. [*feeling Adrian's cheek.*] O my poor dear little Adrian! he's cold as any ice!

Phe. [*half getting up.*] And what could bring you here? It is you have killed him!

Godf. I? And yet I'm sure you heard me bid him not be frightened. Master Adrian!

[Godfrey raises Adrian, and lets him fall again.

Phe. How you go to work! Don't touch him any more. He'll die, if he's not dead already, with such treatment! O my dear, dear brother Adrian! father, mother, Hodge! Why, where can they be?

[She runs into the house for help.

Godf. [*leaning over Adrian.*] No, he's not dead; he breathes a little. Were he dead, I'd go and fling myself this moment into the first pond I come

to. [*He calls out*] Adrian ! master Adrian ! If I knew but how to bring him to himself ! [*He blows on Adrian's face.*] This blowing tries my lungs ! It was very foolish in me, I must own, to tell him what I did ; but much more so in him to pay attention to it ; and particularly when I bid him not be frightened. Could I possibly speak plainer ?—Adrian ! Adrian ! He does not hear me. When my dear wife died, I took on very sadly for her ; but to die on that account would have been very silly ! Adrian ! Adrian ! What had I best do ? He does not seem as if he would recover. Ah, I see a pump—I'll go and fill my hat with water—half a dozen sprinkles may possibly have a good effect on him.

[As he is coming back to Adrian, Mr. Vernon enters, leading in Mrs. Vernon and Constance. Godfrey drops his hat, and runs away,

Godf. Heaven forgive me ! should he find him dead, I don't know what he'll do ! For my part I am dead with fear already. [*Exit.*

Mr. V. Was not that our Godfrey ?—Godfrey, what's the matter ? and where's Adrian ?

Mrs. V. Surely he ran away, as if afraid of meeting us. Where can he have left him ?

Con. [*seeing Adrian on the ground.*] What's here ? a child ? [*stooping down.*] O heaven ! my brother ! and he's dead !

Mrs. V. [*falling down by Adrian.*] How, Constance ! Adrian ? Yes, indeed, help ! help !

Mr. V. Was this misfortune wanting after all ? [*examining the body.*] But he's not dead. Thank

heaven, we're better off than that. He breathes a little. My dear life, [*to Mrs. V.*] as Adrian needs assistance, keep your strength, that he may have it,

Mrs. V. [*nearly swooning.*] Adrian ! Adrian !

Con. Ah ! my poor dear brother ! Would to heaven the flames had rather taken all from us !

[Mr. V. raises Mrs. V. and brings Adrian to her.

Mr. V. There's no time to lose. Have you your salts about you ?

Mrs. V. I can't tell, I'm in such agitation. After so much fear and fright, here's one still greater. I would part with all that's left us for one draught of water.

[Mr. Vernon sees the pump, and hastens to it.

Con. [*feeling in her mother's pocket.*] Here's your sal volatile, mother. [*While the salts are using*] Hear, hear, hear me, Adrian, and look up ; or I shall die with grief. [*He recovers a little.*] O heavens ! he breathes ! [*she runs to her father.*] Come, father ; come quickly ; come and see him.

[Mr. Vernon brings a little water in the hollow of his hand, and throws it in Adrian's face.

Adr. [*sighing bitterly.*] O ! O ! father ! father !

Mr. V. He supposes I am dead ; that blockhead Godfrey must have frightened him,

Con. [*in transport.*] See ! see ! his eyes begin to open.

Mr. V. My dear fellow ! don't you know us ?

Mrs. V. Adrian ! Adrian !

Con. Brother !

Adr. [*looking round him.*] Am I dead or living ?

[illegible] am I? [*he sits up in Mrs. Vernon's lap.*] [illegible]y dear mother!

Mrs. V. My child! and have we brought you back to life?

Adr. [*turning to his father.*] Father too!

Con. [*embracing him.*] My dear Adrian! my sweet brother! I'm alive again, now you are.

Adr. O what joy to see you thus again, dear sister! [*He turns to his mother.*] It was your sweet voice, mother, that brought me back to life.

Mr. V. [*to Mrs. Vernon.*] My dear, I was lamenting our misfortune at the fire; but now discover there was a great deal more to lose, than goods and houses.

Mrs. V. Let's not think a moment more about them.

Mr. V. It is but to rejoice that in reality they are so trifling. I behold you all three safe, and can have nothing to disturb me.

Con. But what brought you, brother, into such a situation?

Adr. Would you think it was Godfrey?

Mr. V. There, I said so.

Adr. Why, he told me you had all three perished.

Con. [*looking over the hill.*] Ah, there he is, father; above there.

[They all look up, and Godfrey draws his head down.

Mr. V. Godfrey! Godfrey! He's afraid to answer *me*; so call him, Adrian.

Adr. Godfrey! Don't be afraid, but come down and show yourself. I'm living.

Godf. [*on the hill.*] Are you sure of that?

Adr. I think so. Did you ever hear a dead man speak ?

Godf. [*coming down, but stopping suddenly.*] You don't intend, I hope, to discharge me ? If you do, I need not be at so much trouble to come on.

Mr. V. See, simpleton, the consequence of speaking without thought !

Mrs. V. A little more, and you had been the death of Adrian.

Adr. Pray, mother, forgive him ! It was not his fault.

Godf. No, certainly. I bid him not to be frightened. [*Adrian holds out his hand.*] I'm however glad you don't intend me any harm ; and for the future, I'll think no one dead, till I see him ten feet under ground, and fairly buried.

SCENE III.

Adrian, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon, Constance, Meadows, Bridget, Hodge, and Phebe.

Mea. [*running in.*] O the wretch ! where is he ?

Phe. [*showing Godfrey.*] Look, father, here !

[Godfrey slinks behind his master.

Mea. Who's this ?

[Phebe and Hodge run towards Adrian, who presents them both to Constance ; Meadows bows to Mr. Vernon.]

Mr. V. [*raising him.*] My friend ! what means this humble attitude ? With such respect to bow before me ! my preserver ! and not only mine, but the preserver of all my family !

Mea. Yes, sir, it is another obligation you have

laid upon me. I have had the opportunity of showing you my gratitude for all your favors.

Mr. V. You have done much more for me than I ever did for you, and more than I shall ever have it in my power to do.

Mea. What say you, sir? The service of a moment only. I, on the other hand, have lived these eight years by your bounty. You observe these fields, this farm; from you I had them. You have lost your all; permit me therefore to return them. It will be happiness enough for me, that I shall always have it in my power to say, I have not been ungrateful to my benefactor.

Mr. V. Well then, my good friend, I *do* permit you to return them; but on this proviso, to enrich you with much better. You have, luckily for me, preserved my strong box, which had all my papers in it, and those writings are the best part of my fortune. As I now possess no house in London, I'll go down into the country, whither you shall follow me, and we will fix our habitations at a seat I have in Norfolk. All your children shall be mine.

Adr. Ah! dear father, I meant to beg as much. See, here's my sister Phebe, and here's Hodge my brother. If you knew the love and friendship they have shown me! Possibly I might now have been dead, but for their kindness.

Mrs. V. [*taking Bridget's hand.*] We will henceforth be one family; and all our happiness shall be in loving each other like friends.

Bri. In the mean time enter and repose your-

selves. Excuse us, if we do not give you the accommodations in our cottage we would certainly have wished.

Mea. [*looking towards the hill.*] I see my cart, sir, and a number of poor people following. Will you give me leave to go and offer them the services of which they are so much in need ?

Mr. V. I'll go with you, and join in consoling them. I am too much interested in the melancholy accident which has distressed them ; though a far less sufferer by it. Less ! I should have said no sufferer, but a gainer ; for the day which I considered, at first, so miserable, gives me back much more than I have lost. It gives me, in return for such things as with money I can purchase, what is far beyond the value of all money ; a new family and friends, who will be henceforth precious to my heart.

FOOLISH FRIGHTS.

MR. HUNTER was one afternoon at home, and in the drawing room with his four children, Lambert, Charlotte, Dorothy, and Felix, when three gentlemen, whose names were Vernon, Fairfield, and Fitzwilliam came to see him. They were Mr. Hunter's oldest friends; the children likewise loved them greatly, and were much rejoiced to see them. They would always listen to their conversation with a greedy ear, as being not only instructive, but amusing; and on this particular occasion sat with so much attention, that they let the night come on without once thinking they needed lamps.

Mr. Vernon was, at this moment, relating a very curious circumstance which happened to him in his travels. Suddenly a dreadful noise was heard from the second pair of stairs. The children crowded together in a fright, behind their father's elbow chair, instead of going out of the room to see what was the matter, as Mr. Hunter thought they would have done. He had bid Lambert, his eldest son, go out for this purpose; but Lambert passed the order to his sister Charlotte; Charlotte to her younger sister Dorothy; and Dorothy to Felix,

During these negociations, which indeed were all transacted in a minute's time, the noise continued, and came nearer; but not one among the children left their station.

Mr. Hunter eyed them with an inquiring look which seemed to ask if he, or his friends, should take the trouble to rise, and ascertain what accident had happened.

The four children now began their march together towards the door, but in the figure of a square battalion, each supported by the other. They soon arrived near the door, when Lambert, with a fearful step, advanced and opened it; but instantly fell back into his former place. The little ones, however, were not in the least delivered from their terror, when they saw a terrific figure, clothed in white, and crawling on all fours. In short, our young circle, at this sight, turned round, and, setting up a loud shriek, retreated toward their father, who rose from his seat, went toward the landing place, and cried out, 'Who is there?'

'I,' replied a voice, which seemed to issue from the flooring.

'I,' said Mr. Hunter; 'and pray who is I?'

'The barber's boy, sir, looking for your wig. I went up stairs to bring it down, but let the box fall, which is broken to pieces.'

Think, little friends, what bursts of laughter now succeeded their former silence. Mr. Hunter rung the bell for lights, and, when they came, perceived

the wig-box broken indeed, and the unfortunate wig entangled about the poor boy's right foot.

The tumult of this laughable adventure was scarcely over, when the father ridiculed the folly of his children, and asked of what they had been afraid? They could hardly tell themselves, having been accustomed from their cradles not to be afraid at night, and the servants in the family expressly forbidden to tell them any foolish stories about ghosts or goblins.

The preceding conversation being thus deranged, it turned at last upon this subject, and all wished to know what could occasion those surprising fears, so common to children in darkness.

It is the natural effect of darkness, and that only, answered Mr. Vernon. As children cannot properly distinguish objects in the dark, their imagination, which is always smitten with the marvellous, shapes them out into extraordinary figures, by enlarging or contracting what they look at, as circumstances suggest, till their weakness finally persuades them that they are utterly unable to resist these monsters which they think armed to hurt them. Terror thus obtains possession of them, and too frequently impresses fears which have the worst of consequences.

They would be ashamed, said Mr. Hunter, if they saw, in open day, what often gives them so much fright at night.

It was, for all the world, said Lambert, just as if

I saw it; but I needed only touch it, and then I should have known very well what it was.

O yes, said Charlotte, you have given us an admirable token of your courage. *Needed only to touch it!* And therefore, I suppose, you would have let me *touch* the door, but that I pushed you forward.

It becomes you well to talk about my fear, said Lambert; you that got behind poor Felix——

And poor little Dorothy behind me, added the sly Felix.

Come, said Mr. Hunter, I can see you have nothing with which to reproach each other. But Lambert's notion is not, on that account less rational; for as, in all the monstrous shapes which we image to ourselves, we have only natural accidents to fear,—so we may ward off all danger by the sense of feeling, which distinguishes what frequently deceives the sight. It is the neglect of this precaution in our infancy, which makes so many of us fancy ghosts in every object round about us. I remember, on this head, a story, comical enough, which I will tell you.

The four children now came round their father, crying out, A story! O, a story! and their father thus began it,

In my father's house, there lived a maid-servant, who one night was sent for beer into the cellar. We were all seated at the table, waiting, but no servant came with the beer. My mother, who was rather of a hasty temper, rose from the table, and

went out to call her. As it chanced, the cellar door was open, but she could not make the servant hear. My mother ordered me to bring a lamp, and go down into the cellar with her. I went first, to light the way; but, as I looked straight forward, I did not mind my steps, and all at once fell over something rather soft. The light went out, and, getting up, I put my hand upon another hand, quite cold and motionless. Upon the cry which I uttered, down came the cookmaid with a candle. She drew near, and we discovered the poor girl stretched along upon the ground, face downward, in a swoon. We raised her up, and put to her a smelling bottle. She recovered her spirits; but had hardly lifted up her eyes, when she cried out: 'There! there she is! there still!' Who is there? replied my mother. 'That tall white woman, hanging in the corner. See! see! see!' We looked the way which she pointed; and in fact did see, as she described it, something white and of a tolerable length, suspended in a corner. 'Is it only *that?*' asked the cookmaid, bursting into a laugh. 'Why that is nothing but a leg of mutton, which I bought last night. I hung it there that it might be quite fresh and cool; and put a napkin round it to keep off the flies.' She ran immediately, took off the napkin, and exhibited the leg of mutton to her fellow servant, who stood trembling with fear. It was a quarter of an hour before she was convinced of her ridiculous mistake. She at first insisted, that the phantom stared in her face with saucer eyes; that

she had turned to run away, but that the ghost had followed her, fastened on her petticoat, and seized upon the candle in her hand. What happened after this she could not tell.

It is very easy to explain all this, said Mr. Vernon; and assign the reason why your servant fancied thus extravagantly. When the fright first seized her and she swooned, the circulation of the blood was stopped, and she could not run away; she thought she was held. Her limbs were deprived of strength, so that she could not hold the light, and therefore supposed the spectre took it from her.

We are happy, added Mr. Hunter, that the understanding and good sense of people have begun to dissipate these foolish notions concerning ghosts and goblins. There was once a time of so much ignorance, that these ideas mixed with superstitious notions, and deprived the boldest of their courage; but, thank heaven, they are completely done away in cities; although, in many cases, they subsist in the country, which is still supposed to be inhabited by witches, and a train of evil spirits. What I am now going to tell you is a laughable example of the prevalence of this belief.

Tom Stubbs, a laboring man, was one evening returning from a fair, with Edmund and Susan, his two children. It was toward the end of autumn, when the day shuts in early.

Tom, in going by an alehouse, told the children that he would stop and refresh himself a little, di-

recting them, as they were well acquainted with the road before them, to go onward, and in half a dozen minutes he would overtake them. Edmund and Susan therefore went on slowly, talking of the drollery of a puppet show which they had been seeing, and, as well as they were able, talking like the wooden figures in it. All at once, about. the middle of a path, which passed round the corner of a little wood into the public road, their eye caught something very bright, that seemed to dance upon the ground, or rise and fall by turns. Their father, who had formerly been a soldier, had frequently told them they must never be afraid of what they saw by night, which at a distance might assume a frightful figure ; but to go boldly up to it, and they would find it was nothing. Edmund had forgotten this instruction. He could hardly speak, he shook all over, and perspired abundantly ; whereas his sister laughed to see him so frightened, saying that she would go and see the apparition nearer. Edmund in vain assured her that it was a ghost, who would certainly twist her neck off. She was not discouraged by these foolish notions, but went toward the light, without stopping.

She arrived within a dozen yards of it, when behold she discerned the very puppet-show man, who had entertained them at the fair, and who was seeking something with his lantern. It appears that, in drawing out his handkerchief, his purse followed ; and for upwards of ten minutes he had looked about to find it on the ground, near the

spot. Susan, who always had her wits about her searched the hedges, and found it hanging on a sprig. The show-man gave her, as a recompense, the punchinello which had made her laugh so much; and, as they went along, instructed her how to twitch the strings, and to make it play in that diverting manner which she had so lately seen.

They were hardly at home, when Tom came in. The puppet-man informed him of what had happened, and extolled Susan's courage. It was now extremely dark, however, and little Edmund was not to be seen. Tom began to fear some accident, and therefore took a lamp, and with Susan ran to see if he could find him.

They went very fast, and hallooed, as they ran, at intervals. At last they heard, a great way off, the voice of some one in distress. They proceeded to it, and found Edmund in a ditch, unable to get out. He was covered with mud from head to foot, and his face and hands sadly torn by brambles.

How the deuce came you here? said his father, as he helped him out.

Ah, father, I was running with my head turned towards a jack-a-lantern which ran after me; and, as I could not see my way, I tumbled in here. I wanted to get out, but could find nothing but brambles to lay hold of. See how they have scratched my face and hands; and thereupon he began his cries and lamentations afresh.

Tom reproved him roughly for his cowardice; but Edmund was much more vexed when told of

his sister's good luck. He could not be consoled for having lost his share in the diverting punchinello, which she knew by this time how to play with great dexterity.

The lantern, in your tale, said Mr. Vernon, causes me to recollect a singular adventure with a lantern in it, which performed its part so well, as to affright not merely such a little cottager as Edmund, but a whole village.

I was coming home one night on horseback, from a visit which I had just been making to a number of neighboring villages, where I had quartered my recruits. A great deal of rain had fallen during the afternoon and evening of that day, which had broken up the road, and it was raining still with the same violence; but, being forced to join my company the next morning, I set out, provided with a lantern, having to pass a narrow defile between two mountains. I had cleared it, when a gust of wind took off my hat, and carried it so far, that I despaired of recovering it again in the tempest, and therefore gave up the matter. By great good fortune, I had on a large scarlet cloak. I covered up my head and shoulders with it, leaving nothing but a little hole through which to breathe and see; and, for fear the wind should take a fancy to my cloak as well as hat, I passed my right arm round my body to secure it, so that, riding in this position, you may easily conceive that my lantern, which I held in my right hand, was under my left

shoulder. At the entrance of a village, on a hill, I met three travellers, who no sooner saw me, than they ran away, as if they were possessed. For my part, I went on at a gallop, and, when come into the town, alighted at an inn, where I intended to rest and dry myself a little; but, soon after, who should enter but my three poltroons, as pale as death. Trembling as they spoke, they told the landlord and his people, that on the road they had encountered a great figure of a man all over blood, whose head was like a flame of fire, and, to increase the wonder, it was placed beneath his shoulder.

He was mounted on a dreadful horse, quite black before, and grey behind, which, notwithstanding it was lame, he spurred and whipped directly up the mountain with extraordinary swiftness.

Here they ended their relation. They had taken care to spread the alarm as they were flying from this wondrous apparition, and the people had come with them to the inn in such a drove, that upwards of a hundred were all squeezed together, opening their mouths and ears at this tremendous story.

To make up in some sort for my dismal journey, I resolved to laugh a little and be merry at their cost, intending at the same time to cure them of such frights, by showing them their folly in the present instance. With this view I again mounted my horse behind the inn, went round about till I had rode the distance of half a mile; then turning, I disposed my accoutrements, that is to say, my cloak and lantern, as before, and on I came, upon a gallop towards the inn. You should have seen the frighted mob of spectators, how they hid their faces at the sight, and crowded into the inn door. There was no one except the host who had courage to remain and keep his eye upon me. I was now before the door, when I shifted the position of my lantern, let my cloak drop down upon my shoulders, and appeared the same figure he had seen me by his kitchen fire.

It was not without difficulty that we could bring the simple people from their terror, who crowded

into the house for safety; the three travellers in particular, as the first impression was still strong within them, could not credit what they saw. The affair ended by a hearty laugh at their expense, whilst talking of the man whose head was like a flame of fire, and placed beneath his shoulder.

This is my ghost story; and perhaps if I had not afforded these people such a conviction of the fallacy of their groundless apprehension, the story of my strange appearance would have passed from one old woman to another, and for centuries occasioned mortal fears through the country.

It once depended only on me too, in the same manner, said Mr. Fairfield, to afford the subject of a fine story to the gossips of my country, in an adventure that befel me one night, about the time of my leaving school.

I was come home at Midsummer, and had received an invitation from my uncle to be with him a month or thereabouts. While I was there, I had occasion to get up one night or rather morning. I was obliged to pass along a gallery, and had nothing but the moon to guide my steps, and that was very much obscured by clouds. In going by a window which opened to the garden, I saw a monstrous figure moving at a little distance from the gallery where I was. The moon, which cast a faint light on the monster, gave it an appearance rather frightful. It was like a great Colossus, with the upper part inclining forward. As it went away I saw it by degrees diminish. All at once, however,

t appeared to break in two. One half seemed motionless and dead, the other greatly agitated ; but, as neither of the two approached me, in the fear which seized me I had strength enough to bawl out, Help ! help ! help ! I had only time to utter these words, when the living half of the phantom ran to the place where I was, and in a suppliant accent said to me, Ah, master Charles, do not cry out, for heaven's sake !

I thought I remembered the voice ; and, taking courage, went boldly up to it, crying, Who are you ? Some housebreaker doubtless ?—No, no, master, I am Sam the coachman.—Sam the coachman ! answered I ; and what are you about at such an hour as this ?—I followed him, for he was now gone from me, and perceived a sack of something leaning on the wall. I now saw clearly what had given him such a monstrous appearance ; and why he seemed to break in two when he threw the sack off his shoulders. I asked what the sack had in it ?

I am going, answered he, early to town. Last night I quite forgot to carry my horses their supply of oats, and they must eat before they leave the stable. So I rose to get it ; but pray do not speak a word about it in the house, I beg you ; they might think me very careless, and perhaps a thief.

It came into my head, upon the spot, that he might in fact be what he seemed afraid of being thought. I had myself the night before, I remembered, met him with a sack of oats upon his back. Besides, it was not towards the stable that he was going, he was very near a little door which opened

at the bottom of the garden towards a lane; and further, I thought two sacks of oats were a great deal more than three horses (for my uncle had but three) could want. At breakfast I informed my uncle of this business. After some examination, it was found that the coachman had a false key in his possession, by means of which he had at different times purloined the corn intended for the horses.

Now if, when the phantom approached, and called me by name, I had not overcome my first fright, but run away to shun him, with what terrible ideas should I have been possessed all night? The idea of this monster might perhaps have accompanied me through my whole life, and rendered me a coward, if it had not disordered my brain, and robbed me of my understanding.

Mr. Fitzwilliam in his turn remarked that nothing was more probable. As a proof of which, said he, I have been lately told of an unhappy incident, which shows how terrible the effects of fear may be on children. I will tell it at length, my little friends, and I hope the story will not fail to cure you of a wish to frighten one another when it is dark, if you ever indulge in such a practice.

Charles Pomeroy, a child of great vivacity and understanding, had taken such a fancy for music, that, beside his daily lesson on the piano, which his master came to give him every morning, he would go at night on a visit to his master, who resided in the neighborhood, and there repeat it.

Charles's brother Augustus was a good boy likewise, but had something of a turn towards drollery; and spent the time, when Charles was at his book, scheming how he might play off some trick or other, no ways minding who became the object of his waggery. He took notice that his brother frequently came home alone, and sometimes when it was dark; and he turned his thoughts upon a contrivance to frighten him a little. He could walk on stilts. One evening therefore, at the time his brother was expected home, he put himself into a pair of very high ones, wrapped a large white sheet about him, which trailed far behind upon the ground; and took a broad brimmed hat which he flapped down, and having covered it with crape, of a sufficient length to hang a great way down on every side, but most of all before, put it on his head. Thus frightfully equipped, he placed himself upright, and at a little distance from the house, close by the garden gate, through which his brother always entered. Charles was now returning in the innocent delight peculiar to a child, and humming to himself the tune that he had been playing. He was scarcely come within a dozen paces of the gate, when he perceived the vast Colossus advancing to attack him. Agitated with a mortal fright, at such an apparition, he fell down upon the ground deprived of understanding. Poor Augustus, who had not foreseen the consequences of his fatal frolic, threw away his mask immediately and fell upon his brother's almost breathless body, and did every

thing in his power to reanimate him; but, alas! the unhappy little fellow, as he found, was every thing but dead. His parents instantly ran to the spot, and, with a great deal of difficulty, brought him back to life. He opened his eyes and viewed them with a vacant, stupid look. They called him by every tender name; but he appeared as if he did not comprehend them. He endeavored, but in vain, to speak; his tongue tried to do so, but without articulation. He is now deaf, dumb, and foolish, and will very probably remain so all his lifetime. Six or seven months have passed since this deplorable occurrence, and the doctors who attend him have, as yet done nothing toward his cure.

Imagine, little friends, if you are able, the distress and sorrow of his parents. It would certainly have been better, both for them and him, had he died on the spot. They would not then have every day before them such a piteous object of affliction and despair. But their distress is nothing in comparison to that of Augustus. Since the unhappy accident, he has become like a skeleton, much more than a human creature. He can neither eat nor sleep. His tears exhaust him. Twenty times a day he walks about the room and suddenly stops short; he wrings his hands, plucks out his hair, and even deplores his birth. He calls and embraces his dear brother, who no longer knows him. I have seen them both and cannot tell which of the two is most unhappy.

THE ADVENTURES OF A JOURNEY.

LETTER I.

FROM DORMER LENNOX TO HIS SISTER JESSICA.

Dear Sister,

I THINK I see you put on an air of importance already, on receiving a letter from me, when I have hardly got a mile beyond the threshold of the door. However, be not very proud of such an honor, since I write it, in the first place, by command; as my father imagines that, if I start a correspondence and you second it, we shall acquire some ease in letter-writing, which he says can only be attained by practice, just like other arts; and, in the next place, since I write not so much for your sake, as that of my canary-bird. When I set out, I quite forgot to recommend him to your friendship; and I know of some young ladies, who would have an object constantly before their eyes and yet forget it, if their memory were not continually interested by a compliment bestowed, at seasonable intervals, upon their vanity. Know then, that, in the fullness of my power, I make you governess of Fidele, and grant you the entire control of his household in future. Take the greatest care not to forget the duties of your office, if you would not have me take it from you. It is

extremely proper that I should make, in this place one or two sagacious observations; namely, that the bird can no more live on nothing than yourself; that, if he does not eat and drink, he cannot live; that he will be incapable of singing, if he dies; and last of all, that, if he ceases singing neither you nor I can hear him, which would be a pity. I conceive it needful also to remind you of his service the other day, when you were making such sad work as you remember of your dancing, by moving to his mucic while you disregarded Mr. Dupré's kit. The little creature set up such a pipe, that Mr. Dupré turned all his anger on him, forgetting what your giddy heels deserved.

These reasons are, I think, sufficient to engage your friendship in behalf of Fidele; but still, if gratitude and music have no manner of effect upon your marble heart, I have nothing but the thunder of my eloquence to move you. Tremble therefore! Think him dead already. Yes, Jessica, dead! and then determine how you will be able to support so shocking an idea. Fancy that you behold him lying with his feet uppermost, his wings grown stiff, his eyes and little beak shut fast for ever. See him laid upon his back with the little box which you intend for his coffin, and surrounded on every side with nightshade, vervain, cypress-branches, and the weeping-willow. Every body mourns him. They inquire what cruel hand has plunged him thus into eternal darkness. A lamenting voice makes answer. It was I, unfeeling as I am! and instantly you throw

yourself beside him. But I think you weep. If so, let me cry, Victory! for I have nothing now to fear upon account of Fidele, or for the quiet of your shade. Beside his ordinary victuals, do not forget to let him have every day, a bit of biscuit or a lump of sugar. You will also do extremely well to shade his house with something green, as it would soften his affliction in my absence.

As I dare persuade myself that you will, for my sake, worthily perform the duties of your charge, I purpose sending you, as some encouragement for all your zeal and industry, a faithful narrative of my extended travels. You will see adventures and achievements in it, such as should be handed down to latest posterity. Farewell, my dearest sister. I give up the playful style at least to tell you, as persuasively as I am able, how I love you, and with what affection I shall always be

Your gentle brother,

DORMER LENNOX.

LETTER II.

FROM JESSICA TO DORMER.

Dear Brother,

Truly one must have queer notions to suppose that a sister should be proud of hearing from her brother! I imagine that all the boasting should be rather upon your side in reflecting, that for once at least you have performed your duty, and not had your ears well pulled beforehand; though

you lose all merit in the matter, by insinuating that you have written to me by father's command, and for the sake of little Noisy.

But, indeed, you needed not have recommended Fidele so strongly to my care, nor lavished such a deal of rhetoric in his behalf. He is worthy of all my attention on his own account; so pray do not be uneasy lest I should not use him kindly. It is true, I shall not fill his trough till it runs over, after the example of some little boys I know, who would not care a farthing should he burst, as certainly he would, were he as fond as they are of his appetite. Very likely too they would make one think that they overload him thus with victuals purely through kindness, when they only do it, that they may not have so troublesome a task again upon their hands for ten or fifteen days to come. No, no; I will show myself much more regular in my attention to him, as he certainly shall have fresh victuals every morning. Yesterday when I approached his cage to clean it, the first thing that I saw was seed sufficient to subsist him for a month, without including what was scattered on the bottom. To be sure, I must confess he is such a spendthrift, that he scatters more about him in an hour, than would suffice him for a day. But how shall I describe the floor of his apartment? Thanks to your attention or your slothful waste, it was exactly like a pond, occasioned by continual overflowings from the fountain, and poor Fidele could not descend for fear of being drowned. How rejoiced he was to see dry

land ! At first, he could not think of coming down without precaution, as he tried it with one foot, while with the other he clung closely to the wire-work. Thus without the least expense have I enlarged his habitation ; for he always kept upon the perches, fearing to dirt his feet and tail at least ; if not, as I have just said, to be drowned. I have strowed a layer of fine sand upon the bottom of his mansion, and adorned the sides and top with groundsel, so that now he may suppose himself within a shady grove. In future, brother, you may do as you think proper, but it is I who take upon me to provide for Fidele. I will have his palace serve you as a model of propriety and taste in *your* apartment.

I have now written enough, I think, to quiet the uneasiness intimated in your letter ; and must tell you that I have also my inquietudes, which I proceed to mention. You are certainly a little giddy-headed, and we have here a sly black cat who comes prowling daily. Take care, when you return. I have observed that he has conceived a love for Fidele, sufficient to alarm one. Yesterday early, when I came in to give him food, I forgot to shut the door, and puss had crept in slily after me. When I had waited on the bird, and given him what he wanted, I began to thumb your books, when suddenly I heard a tender *mewing* behind me ; I turned instantly about, and saw Grimalkin wriggling his whole body every way upon a sofa, opposite the cage. He was admiring Fidele ; he played his tail about, and seemed to say, ' My dear, sweet, pretty

bird, come now and perch close by me; or else stay, I will jump upon your cage, for only see what nice soft paws I have to hug you; (but remark, he carefully concealed his claws.) I will fondle you all day and press you to my tender heart. Do not let my whiskers frighten you; they are long enough, I must acknowledge, but won't hurt you. I have a little mouth beneath them, Fidele, with which I will kiss your pretty beak.'

Now what do you imagine Fidele replied to these fine words? Why nothing; but one might easily discern that he was not likely to become Grimalkin's dupe; and I suppose in pussy's place he would have been as great a rogue. Have you been his instructer, brother, after all? He stooped and raised his head, he shook his feathers and cast many a look of defiance on the orator, and of confidence on me, as if he would have said, 'I know you very well. Your sugared words, your nice soft paws, and little mouth concealed beneath your whiskers, are no less perfidious than your tender heart. You may deceive perhaps a poor mouse; but me—O, no; I laugh at your cunning and defy your malice. I have here a friend to save me.' Upon which he cried *queek, queek, queek*, with all his might. I understood him perfectly well; and, without pretending that I heard any thing, I ran instantly to that part of the chamber, where stood a cistern full of water, and besprinkled our young gentleman puss so finely, as to put out all at once the fervor of his friendship. For he needed but one jump to be

upon the floor, and, as he ran away, he shook his coat as if he had the ague. Recollect this observation, should he come incognito on a visit, after you have returned.

This mealy-mouthed, good-natured animal, whom many in the world resemble, made me recollect an ode our friend wrote, and which was lying in the paper case. I send it you, that, if you know any good composer in your neighborhood, you may prevail upon him, for my sake, to set it to music.

ODE.

Of those folks with a sly hypocritical air,
With manners so nice,
And looks so precise,
The sight I was never yet able to bear.

When I see them, I think of a cat on the watch,
Near some high-seasoned dish,
Whether flesh, fowl, or fish,
Where the scent is so sweet,
He would venture his feet,
And longs to be making a snatch.

With an innocent look, quite gentle and free,
He'll jump on your knee,
There, waving his tail, he'll mew, and all that;
And so fondly he'll pat,
And appear so demure,
That you'll think, to be sure,
No mischief can lurk in the heart of our cat.

At the savory bit, which already in fancy
He has eaten up quite,
You'll hardly perceive him to cast a sly glance;
Yet look but askance,
And at once to your tit-bit good night;

For, taking a spring at the morsel so nice,
He makes sure of his prey, and then off in a trice,
Heigh presto! you'd say it was all necromancy.

I wait with great impatience to receive the narrative which you promise of your travels, which must needs be very curious. I shall dine to-morrow in the country with mother. If any thing should happen of an interesting nature on the road, I pledge myself to give you a relation of it. Since you mean a visit to posterity, I shall be charmed to share with you in the praise of our descendants. In the interval, I wish to have it known, that you will never possess a truer friend in any one than in your sister,

JESSICA LENNOX.

LETTER III.

FROM DORMER TO JESSICA.

Dear Sister,

I return you my sincerest thanks for the delightful letter which you have sent me to dispel my fears. The scene between my Fidele and your black cat, with their imaginary conversation, could not but amuse me greatly. I allow Grimalkin's eloquent harangue to be very clever; but the other's *queek, queek, queek*, much more so, since it ended in the adversary's total defeat through your incomparable courage; and for which you ought to have a cistern full of water in your escutcheon, when the herald makes out your coat of arms.

I have been hard at work these three days on the journal of my travels, which I promised to send

you, as a recompense for your care of Fidele. Father approves the thought of our communicating our adventures thus to each other. His opinion is, as I have already told you, that, by this sort of correspondence, we shall acquire a habit of inditing with facility, and of properly reflecting on such objects as may engage our attention. As much as I have written, he informs me, seems to have been done with accuracy, and he desires to read the account which you have promised of your dinner in the country with mother. Frederic and Louisa certainly were of the party: O, how much impertinence must of necessity have passed between you! but indeed, though you should tell me only of your own, I know you have a stock in hand sufficient to supply a chapter, and that chapter not the shortest that ever was written. To encourage you in sending me this chapter with the greatest expedition, I shall be myself as quick as possible in the collation of the several parcels of my narrative, inscribed on more than twenty scraps of paper. You will have it in a week or thereabouts. Adieu: in the mean time, I clasp you to my heart, and am, as long as I have life,

Your brother, and your friend, DORMER LENNOX.

LETTER IV.

FROM JESSICA TO DORMER.

Dear Brother,

What can you be thinking about, to let me wait so long before I see the journal of your expedition? Are you gone, like Gulliver, to some unknown

strange island, for the sake of having such achievements to record, as no one will be authorized to contradict? I cannot but admire the great exactitude and order on which you pride yourself so much, in the mention of your twenty scraps of paper, scattered up and down, no doubt, in every corner of your chamber. It will be fortunate, however, if the little cat belonging to your habitation does not please herself with playing with the best part of your narrative. I should not be surprised were I to discover many chasms in it, or perceive that you had begun with the conclusion, and affixed the fag-end, as we say, where the commencement should be, which would prove at least as entertaining as the chapter stuffed up with my impertinences. I cannot tell at present, if the cistern-full of water would look well in my escutcheon; but suppose that your sibyl's leaves would make a special coat-of-arms for you.

Since my father desires to see my narration, I shall make haste to send it in a day or two; but hope that the intervening time will bring me yours; for I should really be sorry to postpone my great adventure till the Grecian Calends; which, as I have somewhere read, means just the same as if I should forever omit relating them. Pray embrace father on my account, as tenderly as you are able, and desire him to return you, as affectionately as he is able, all the kisses that you have given him for

Your sister and friend, JESSICA LENNOX.

P. S. Inclosed you have my Journal.

One has no occasion to go over so much ground as you have travelled, to be able to supply the reader with adventures. We had hardly passed the Clapham road, before we fell in with a drover, who was driving about a hundred sheep to Brighton. As our coachman thought his honor concerned in not permitting such a scrubby drove of cattle to usurp the road and make him quit his track, he drove the carriage through them. The poor sheep, who are accounted to have honest hearts but weak intellects, not knowing whither they should run, in their confusion got between the horses' legs; and some were even entangled in the spokes. The drover bid the coachman stop, as loud as he could roar; but the coachman, deaf to his vociferations, would not in the least relax his speed, and still continued on the trot.

The wind was rather fresh, and therefore we had all the glasses up. My brother Frederic wished to know by what means the poor sheep would free themselves from their embarrassment. Unfortunately, he forgot that, if he wished to look about him, it was necessary first of all to let down the glass; and of course he thrust his head quite through and through the brittle crystal, which that moment broke into a thousand pieces. You may judge with what alacrity he drew his head in again; but in so doing he was slightly wounded in his forehead by a piece of the glass. He put his hand di-

rectly on the part, and so contrived, as, with the little blood proceeding from the scratch, to smear his face all over completely, and look exactly like the jolly Bacchus, at the ale-house opposite our door. Louisa, at this sight, was sure that her brother must have had his nose cut off, and did not doubt but it had dropped among the sheep; on which the tender-hearted little thing began to cry, Frederic! ah my poor dear brother! till mother had, with a little scented water which she poured upon her handkerchief, wiped his face clean, and given it once more that sly look which you know it possesses. Well, dear brother, what are your ideas? I, for my part, fancy that you do not engross all the giddiness belonging to our family, and already little Frederic gives full proof that he is not a jot less giddy than his elder brother.

Nothing worth mentioning happened after this event, till we arrived at our dear nurse Margaret's, with whom we were to dine and stay till evening. After having all of us received her kind embraces, we went through the house, and into the fields, where we proposed to take a walk. By accident, I was a little distant from the rest; and, as I passed along a hedge, observed three little birds which had been taken by the leg in a perfidious springe. The pretty creatures flapped their wings most lamentably, and implored me, or at least I thought so, to set them free. You may suppose, I did not show myself insensible to their petition. Instantly I broke their bonds, and had the pleasure to behold

how grateful they appeared; for I could fancy gratitude in all their motions, as they flew away. This pity which I had shown them did not please a little country boy who lived hard by, and had established very greedy hopes upon the sale of these three prisoners; so that their deliverance, as I mean to let you see, and shortly, but for accidental circumstances, might have cost us dear.

The sun towards noon had dissipated all the mists. The day was so delightful, that mother desired we might enjoy the pleasure of a rural meal, and therefore requested Margaret to let us have our dinner in the garden. After dinner, we had strawberries and cream; and, at the very moment when poor Frederic, with the freedom which country manners allow, happened to be lifting the plate to his mouth, that he might save himself the trouble of despatching matters with the spoon, a stone struck it right upon the rim, and overset the whole of its contents upon the table, not without first plentifully besprinkling several of us round about. You should have seen us in the height of our confusion, palpitating with fright, as if we had imagined that Jupiter was flinging down his thunderbolts among us. Margaret's husband, who is not a man to swoon at every noise, that moment posted towards the garden door, to catch this thundering deity, who was certainly the little peasant who had set the springes. But the deity, like those mentioned in Homer who amused themselves at the expense of mortals, had already made himself invisible. It was all lost labor that.

our host stood sentry at the door. He only saved us from the danger of another thunderbolt, which might have otherwise been pointed at us.

Dinner was now over, and I thought of paying one more visit to the neighboring hedges, and delivering, if I could, some other prisoners, when mother informed us that we must think of setting out on our return. We entered the coach once more with some reluctance, after having made dear Margaret our little presents each. There never sure had been a finer evening. From a hill, upon the top of which our coachman stopped to give his horses breath, we had the pleasure to behold a spacious horizon, adorned with clouds of every colour, and set off with gold. The sun, which, as I thought, rejoiced in Frederick's having given him access to us, out of gratitude coloured Louisa's face and his with all the purple of his rays. Our cousin, who you know has been abroad, at this sight turned round, and told mother that they looked exactly like the cherubims that Roman Catholics place for ornament about the altars in their churches.

The poor sheep that we met in the morning, certainly must have alarmed their comrades, and gone off, as we encountered none on our return. We met no sort of company but half a dozen asses, who had certainly a very reverend figure, and a mule or two. Our horses, who, I fancy, thought they could discern a family resemblance in these last, were giving up the right-hand side of the road, and complimenting them with fifty gambols and curvets; but our proud

coachman would preserve the honor of his seat, and feelingly convinced them, with his whip, that they were creatures of much more importance; and that, ranking as they did above them in all books of natural history, it was but just they should preserve it on the road. They were obliged to yield assent to arguments so striking, and got home in perfect order, and without any other misadventure. J. L.

LETTER V.

FROM DORMER TO JESSICA.

It is not in the least degree astonishing, my dear sister, that you should come off so readily in the recital of a journey, which has brought you into company with none but short-horned, or long-eared animals; a giddy boy who breaks window glasses; or a little raggamuffin that pelts you with stones. If such affairs are what you call adventures, I can hardly guess what name you can find magnificent enough for mine. And, after having told you what has happened to me in the compass of a single parish, you may easily imagine what surprising matters I should have to tell you in a long journey. I begin to think, that, at the period of knight errantry, I should have made a pretty figure, and particularly if I myself sung the great achievements that I should perform; which, trust me, I would do, lest any one, who might be tempted to record them, should not do it to my liking.

Inclosed therefore I send you a small specimen of my abilities as a journalist. I submit it to your

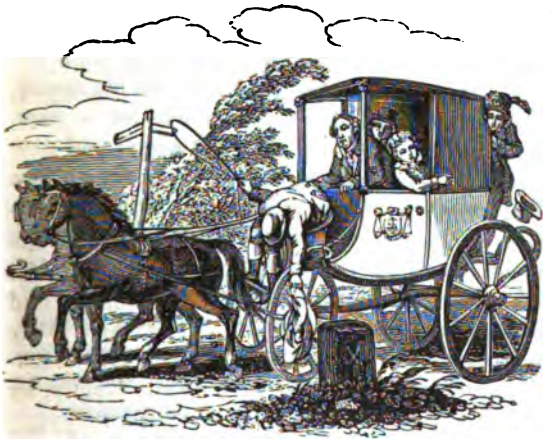
censure ; or, to mend the expression, recommend you to peruse it with your greatest possible attention ; otherwise it is not unlikely but you will miss some among its singular and striking beauties.

Yours, DORMER.

JOURNAL OF MY TRAVELS.

We rolled along in silence for the space of twenty minutes in our carriage, with no less velocity than the clouds above our heads. I blessed the memory of him who first invented this delightful way of travelling without pain or trouble ; and shall always think it charming, till some other inventor brings the project to perfection of transporting us still more delightfully and rapidiy, by means of a balloon, with eagles to direct it.

I was meditating on this subject, when of a sudden I perceived the coachman violently exercised at something. His great coat had slipped from his seat upon one of the front wheels, which carried it about the centre. After many revolutions, he had made shift to fasten on a sleeve, which he was pulling to him, and ejaculating as he tugged, My coat! my coat! I thrust out my head hastily, to see what ailed him, when my hat blew off ; so I joined in concert with the coachman, and cried out as lustily, My hat! my hat! Poor Jeffrey, from his station in the rear, stood witness to my lamentations, and leaned over towards me, when, behold, the furred cap, which he wears, fell off. He did not imitate us, crying out, My cap ! my cap ! but, try-



ing to recover it when falling, somehow or other lost his footing, and came down the nearest way, head foremost. Happily for Jeffrey we were going through a very soft quagmire, otherwise I cannot pretend to tell you what misfortunes would have befallen his limbs; at least, I am sure, his nose and chin would have been both demolished, as he fell into the quagmire face downwards. All this happened in a minute. My father, in this confusion, was the only person who retained his senses. He let down the glass in front, and, seizing on the coachman's reins, which were now fallen from him, stopped the horses. The coachman then descended

and liberated his coat. But what long faces did he make, when he saw in the middle of the back a monstrous rent, through which a judge might easily have thrust his head, and not disordered his huge wig. On his side, Jeffrey, as I saw, had his mouth so filled with mud, that he could not for a time bring out a single syllable. O sister! had you seen him, thus beplastered as he was, offer a grin, in order to show father that his fall had broken no bones, I am sure you would have laughed for a month to come, at recollecting his appearance. He did nothing but sneeze and sputter, shake himself, and rub his knees and elbows with both hands; his coat, which had been green, no longer preserved that colour any where, except behind. In short, he looked as if he was dressed for a masquerade.

He went a little back to seek his fox-skin cap. By great good luck, the maker had not taken off the creature's tail, but left it on to serve by way of plume. By that it was discovered in the quagmire, and by that fished up. When he had got it out, he was obliged to wring it twenty times before it was in a state for travelling, even under Jeffrey's arm. He also picked up my hat, but not before the wind had made it cut a hundred capers this and that way in the air. It lost however nothing by so many somersets; on the contrary, it gained a comfortable coat, which, though all the brushes of the house have frequently been exercised upon it, it still retains, and seems determined to retain, in spite of their beards.

After we were once again prepared for motion forward, and affairs about us in their former order, we proceeded to philosophize upon these accidents; but, after having tried to do so in a very serious strain, we fancied the best method was to take the affair more gaily. My father drew consolation from his purse to give the coachman; and, on my side, as I observed Jeffrey in pain about his fur cap only, since the livery was his master's property, I tipped him such a wink as restored him to a better temper. After which we all went forward, just as if no accident had happened.

We were now come near a village, when father discerned an old soldier, seated on a stone beside the road. One leg was under him, bent backward, and the other, a wooden one, stuck out stiff before him. A long crutch lay quietly upon his left, and, on his right hand, sat a great black dog. Father, who loves a soldier, and particularly when that soldier is a cripple, courteously saluted him, and bade me fling a shilling to him, which he gave me. I fulfilled so honorable a commission in a very dexterous manner, I may say without the least degree of ostentation, as I did not miss the hat. The soldier's gratitude was uttered in so high a pitch, that it sufficed to wake a poor beggar woman, who lay sleeping not far off upon a little straw. She trotted after us and put up at an inn. 'Ah, sir,' said she to my father, 'how you bestow your charity! and if you give it to an old drunken fellow, what assistance

will you afford to an honest woman, as I am, who have not swallowed a glass of liquor stronger than small beer these ten years?' Father, whose mind was occupied on many subjects at that instant, was not thinking of the invalid, and viewed her with visible astonishment. 'Yes, sir,' continued she, 'it is of that drunken soldier I am speaking. O, I heard how much he thanked you for the shilling, which, it seems, you threw him by this little gentleman. I would lay a wager, that, before night comes, he will spend it all in gin. And then, sir, did not you remark the great black dog behind him as he sat? A beggar keep a dog! What is that but robbing other people who deserve assistance?'

'Hold your tongue!' said my father, and seemed quite angry. 'Why abuse a man at this rate, who has no less need than you of compassion? If he drink a little, I can forgive an old soldier such a fault. While we are seated at our ease before a good fire, and even you are not without so great a comfort, soldiers must endure the wind, snow, rain, and every rigor of cold winter. Where can be the wonder then, if they should have recourse to what they think will warm them for the moment, and in time become addicted to the evil? And respecting his great dog, perhaps that animal may be the only friend he has left, his tried associate, and the single creature who partakes of his bad days.'

When he had said these words, he held out three pence, without looking at her. She received them with a kind of scorn, and went off grumbling, till

out of hearing. The ill-natured wretch had made me angry. I am very sorry, sir, said I, that you gave her any thing. She must be a very horrid creature to abuse a poor old soldier, and be envious of the alms which you gave him. 'You are in the right,' replied my father. 'He who wishes to excite my pity, to another's detriment, deserves my indignation only. Yet I saw she was in want, and only upon that account forgot her evil disposition. It is punishment enough that she is reduced to beggary. Had she restrained her tongue, I would have given her as much as I gave the soldier.'

Whilst we were thus discoursing, our host had shown us up into a room, one window of which opened towards the road we had been travelling, and another towards a yard behind the house. Whilst dinner was getting ready, I stood looking out, to mark the carriages which were continually going by; and what can you imagine, sister, I beheld when I had hardly been a minute there?—the beggar woman, who was now come back, and had set herself upon a block beside the gateway. She pulled out a little flask of brandy from her pocket, and began to drink. I called out to father, and bade him come and see. He told me not to speak, lest we should be overheard. We both looked at her, and soon saw the soldier likewise coming down the road, supported by his crutch, and followed by the great black dog. We were curious to overhear their conversation. 'Mother,' said the soldier, who was now come pretty near her, 'do

you mean to take a lodging here, and have no dinner? You are not hungry, I suppose?' 'Heaven help me!' said the hypocrite, and pretended to weep, 'I assure you, my good friend, I do not want for an appetite; if I could but come at something good to eat, I should not much mind what it was.' 'If that be all,' replied the generous soldier, 'I have sufficient for us both.'

He sat down by her, slipped a knapsack from his shoulder, and took out a piece of coarse brown bread, with a slice of cheese wrapped in paper, which he held out to the woman, saying, 'There, good woman, help yourself.' She did so, and pretty plentifully. He was content with what was left, although but a trifle; and of this, for every piece he ate himself, the large black dog, who had assumed his place behind, and all the while was resting his head in a very friendly way upon his master's shoulder, had likewise his share.

During their repast, the hypocritical old woman turned her conversation on the unfeelingness of travellers; adding that the gentleman, who had just before alighted from his carriage, and put up for dinner at the inn, gave her only a poor half-penny. 'That cannot be true,' replied the honest-hearted soldier. 'He must be a noble gentleman; or that he had no money in his purse but gold, which could no easily be changed. See what he threw me by the little gentleman his son—a shilling! It is not often that pieces of silver of this weight tumble into my hat. But do not fret yourself, for you shall be the

better for my luck. I cannot be happy by myself. A good repast requires good liquor, and I have not had a drop within my lips to-day, although it is very late. The truth is, my poor money-bag was so consumptive, that I could easily have passed it through a needle's eye this morning; but, thank heaven, at present it is quite plump and jolly, so that I can well afford to lay out sixpence for us both. Come, good mother, let me have your hand.'

Saying thus, he rose much in spirits, and quite jovial; the old woman took upon her the attendant's part, and officiously held him out his crutch, caressing now and then the dog. I could have beat the wretch for this dissembled friendship. They walked together to the house, and entered the gateway, while we above stairs shifted ground, and went to the other window which looked out into the yard. We heard the soldier call for a gill of brandy with two little glasses, one of which he filled and gave to the woman, who swallowed it immediately. My father could no longer restrain his indignation. 'Out on such a hateful creature!' cried he. They both lifted up their hands. The woman, recollecting us, that moment gave a shriek; but, on the contrary, the soldier was not disconcerted. 'See,' said he, 'good sir, how we are making merry on your bounty. Let me drink your health,' continued he, taking off his hat, 'with that of the young gentleman your son. I never forget any one, however small, who is generously disposed.'

Whilst we were at dinner, the landlord in-

formed us that the honest soldier, whose name was Trim, had been a long time in service; that he did not quit it until he lost his leg, and that he had the esteem and friendship of all his officers. 'It is he,' continued the host, 'who keeps peace and order in the village, since his soldier-like appearance awes the vagabonds about us. Every body would be glad to give him victuals, if he would take their bounty; but he will not accept of any thing which he has not earned by some good service or other, as by going on errands, which he does with no less expedition than fidelity. As regularly as the morning comes, he goes out loaded with a basket full of flints upon his shoulder, and fills the holes which had been made the day before along the road. You must have noticed in what admirable order it appeared. He never asks for any thing; but there is scarcely a traveller accustomed to the road who does not throw him something as he passes by. He takes it without hesitation, as he thinks he has deserved it. This is his employ in summer; and in winter, when the weather is at the coldest, he passes his time in making children's clogs, for which purpose he takes a seat in my kitchen chimney. He generously gives these clogs to children, lest they should happen to take cold, whose parents are too poor to pay his price. The only recompense he asks of them for this trouble is, to see them dance before him.'

Well, sister, what are your thoughts of this good-hearted Trim? This last particular in his story

gave me so much pleasure, that I ordered a pair immediately for you, which I shall take when I return. As you are too generous, and besides too distant to discharge the value of the clogs in capers, I have myself engaged, as you would do, to pay him for them in hard money. I design to give him half a crown, and then the clogs will be much worthier of you. They will not be useless, if you mean to run about at any time next winter in the garden.

If I did not apprehend that my journal had already tired your patience, I should have a great deal more to mention. I would tell you how, as we were going on, I terminated an important matter in a way of which Don Quixote, celebrated as he was for bravery, would never have thought.

You will suppose perhaps that, after such a preface, there was an enchanter, or at least a giant in the case, or some illustrious princess to deliver, or some great kingdom to be recovered by conquest. It was nothing of all this. It was no other than a little girl who was tending a cow, and a boy engaged in the same office with an ass, who were struggling with each other for an apple which the former had found. After having very gravely heard the necessary information of their quarrel, I took up, as you may guess, the weaker party, and defended her, but in nothing more than words, since, fortunately for the stronger, I had neither lance nor shield; or rather, to confess a truth, because, even though I had, he was of a size to thresh my knighthood soundly. I perceived immediately that the moderation of a Solo-

mon or a Titus suited much better with my inferiority of size; and therefore I adjusted the affair in contest to the satisfaction of both combatants, by sharing equally between them the remainder of that tart which you know the cook made for me, that I might not faint with hunger by the way.

I might go on, and tell you of the pitiable fortune of a hare which we saw running across the country, followed by a pack of hounds and huntsmen. The poor creature, after having often thrown them out, as is the phrase with sportsmen, by her doublings on the open plain, had climbed a pointed rock. A furious dog perceived her in this last retreat, and had the audacity to force her. I beheld them both roll down the precipice together, miserably mangled.

But this picture is much too cruel; is it not, Jessica? Let me therefore touch on themes more pleasing, and inform you of the joy which our unexpected coming here gave every one belonging to the house. If your dry jokes had not forever undeceived me on the subject of my own exclusive merit, I should think myself a cleverer fellow, from the hearty welcome which we received. It is much more modest in me to suppose myself indebted for that welcome to the recollection of your visit here, which they have cherished ever since last year. I do suppose it, and place all my boast in thanking you for having laid the groundwork of the entertainment I am now receiving.

And thus, dear sister, I have sent you a recital of my wonderful adventures, which perhaps you

will think too tedious. The most perilous of every circumstance attending them was when, to give you some amusement, I engaged to put them down in black and white. I thought that I should never have come to the conclusion of my task. I will not boast of any merit in the execution of my great undertaking, and yet I please myself with thinking that you will owe my kindness something, when you come to be acquainted that at present they have been ringing for me these ten minutes to come down and eat some fritters which are growing cold, while I myself am hard at work in winding up my letter. I can hardly fancy that the heroism of fraternal love ever yet went much farther than I have pushed it in this instance for you.

Adieu, dear sister! I will divert myself as much as possible for your sake rather than my own, that, at the time of my return, I may present myself before you so much the more merry-hearted. I cannot tell what you may think of this; but, for my part, I think you should look upon it as a proof of the tenderness of that attachment with which I am, dear sister, yours, DORMER LENNOX.

LETTER VI.

FROM JESSICA TO DORMER.

Dear Brother,

I have often heard that nothing forms the understanding so effectually as travelling; and your narrative supplies me with a proof of the assertion which I did not in the least expect; for who would

ever think that such a little animal as you, should think of being a philosopher for having travelled eighteen miles? You told me, in your first epistle, that you designed the Journal of your Travels for posterity. Whenever therefore you think fit to send it as directed, I will take upon me to complete such sketches as are fit to bear it company, which I will get corrected by my drawing master. For example sake, our solemn coachman, who, without once changing his place, gets hold of his great coat, and lugs it by the sleeve; poor Jeffrey, rising solemnly and slowly from his quagmire; and my giddy-headed brother quite uncovered at the chariot door, and with his eyes pursuing the poor hat in all its evolutions. Here are three droll figures; while father, still faithful to his character for prudence, shall be represented as in contrast seizing on the coachman's reins to stop his horses. You don't think I shall forget the old soldier and old woman dining on the block. O, how I'll strive to set off to the best advantage honest Trim, together with his great black dog, that ate so amicably leaning on his shoulder. Finally, I'll terminate my gallery with the scene betwixt your girl with the cow, and your boy tending the ass; not forgetting to describe you as you represent yourself, considering gravely of their quarrel, and accommodating matters with the fragments of an apple-tart. It is true, I will not write at top the name of either Solomon or Titus, which your usual modesty, without the least demur, lays claim to. I have thought of one,

more proper, namely, Sancho Panza, as I hardly ever knew, in all my life, a person of more understanding.

I suppose you will not wish to be behindhand with me; therefore I give up to you the account of my adventures, in perusing which, you will with ease suggest sufficient subjects for a set of pictures, no less interesting, I believe, than those which, from perusing your achievements, I have suggested, as you see, to mine. Was I not going to forget to return you my thanks for ordering me the pair of dogs? My finances will not allow me to repay you the immense expense of so magnificent a present; therefore you will let me satisfy you for it, as Trim does the little children, in my circumstances. I am learning a new caper for that purpose.

I am infinitely touched at your superior generosity, in letting pass no opportunities of recreation for my sake; and beg you to believe my sensibility will naturally do the like.

Adieu, my dear Dormer! As I take it, we are a match for one another in joking. I only wish to go beyond you in the boast of tender friendship, as becomes

Your sister and your friend,

JESSICA LENNOX.

THE GOOD SON.

A DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

JEREMY GOODACRE, *a farmer.*	CHARLES GOODACRE, *a Lieutenant, Son to Jeremy.*
NANCY, *his Wife.*	BONIFACE, *a Schoolmaster.*
CICELY, *their Daughter.*	*Sergeant, Soldiers, &c.*
ISAAC, *her Lover.*	

SCENE I.

A grass plat before Jeremy Goodacre's cottage. In the middle, a large tree, with a seat round it.

Isaac, alone.

I DID not see her all yesterday. I have not spent a day this twelvemonth without seeing her. What can have happened? Every thing is quiet in the house. Ah, Cicely, can you sleep at ease, while you know how uneasy I am? Mayhap she has changed her mind, and loves somebody else. [*Goes toward the cottage door.*] Heh! Cicely! Cicely!

Enter Cicely.

Cic. [*mimicking him.*] Heh! Isaac! Isaac. Well, here I am.

Isaac. You seem to be in high spirits, Cicely!

Cic. Are you angry that I am glad to see you?

Isaac. You did not want to see me yesterday, or you would have been where you promised.

Cic. Well, are you going to scold at me? Do you think that I was not as uneasy as you were?

Isaac. Dear heart! Cicely, are you serious? Well, now I am as happy as I was dull a minute ago. But what hindered you to come?

Cic. You know it was the first day of the month; and when my brother, at his landing, wrote to father from Portsmouth, he told him that he should hear from him again, without fail, yesterday.

Isaac. Well?

Cic. So father would not wait for the postman, but sent me, about four o'clock, to the post-office, for the letter. They told me to wait there; that it could not be long before the coach came in; so I staid, upon thorns. And father, uneasy at my stop, came soon afterwards; and before a quarter of an hour's end, mother came too. You know I could not quit them. So there we staid until dark night, and no coach. I suppose some accident has happened. We came back sorrowful enough, and I could not leave my father and mother grieving by themselves; now tell me, could I?

Isaac. No, you are very right. I shan't scold at you; but what is your hurry now? Where do you want to go?

Cic. To see if the letter is come yet. Father

and mother are terribly uneasy. They are so fond of my brother, and he of them.

Isaac. Now, Cicely—are you fond of me?

Cic. My brother, that was only a private soldier, is now a lieutenant.

Isaac. Yes, Cicely, but——

Cic. And has two or three score of men at his command.

Isaac. Ah, your brother is well off!

Cic. How grand will he be in his scarlet coat, and his shoulder-knot! O, it is a fine thing, Isaac, to be a captain! Do you not think so?

Isaac. Aye, I shall know it, I am afraid. He'll be ashamed now, perhaps, to see me one of his family, as I have no gold shoulder-knot, nor men at my command.

Cic. No, Isaac, do not make yourself uneasy. My father has lived in the same way of life like yours these sixty years; and my brother has too much sense to despise it. He would have been the same as you, if he had not chanced to enlist when he was young. No, he will never look for a husband for his sister out of her own condition.

Isaac. Ah, Cicely, how happy you make me!

Enter Jeremy.

Jer. Are you come back already? Where is the letter? Let's see.

Cic. I have not been to the post-office yet, father.

Jer. And you stand there, prating?

Cic. I was just going. Well, I'll run as fast as I can. Will you go, Isaac?

Jer. Aye, go together; so you will be back the sooner. But don't loiter on the road. And, Cicely, as you pass, you'll tell Mr. Boniface, the schoolmaster, to come here and read the letter for me.

[*Exe. Cicely and Isaac.*

How uneasy I am about the delay of this letter! I could not rest the whole night. Ah, my dear boy, how the thoughts of you make us glad and sorry by turns!

Enter Naney.

Nan. Well, this letter does not come. I don't know how it is; a dread hangs over me.

Jer. Do not be impatient, my dear! we shall hear from him presently, and see him too again, very soon. I know we shall. I am sure I pray for that every day.

Nan. He is a soldier, my good man, and a soldier is not sure of his life a moment. That is what makes me unhappy. Very often, when his letters are read to us, and you imagine that I cry for joy, it is for grief and sorrow. Each, I think, is perhaps his last; and this money, which he sent us at his landing, I cannot look at it without a heavy sigh. As I said to myself, it is his pay from the king, the price of his blood; and can we, his father and mother, be happy while we are spending it? Ah, I wish he were here now!

Jer. We shall have him here by and by, never fear; he will come to quarter in some town, perhaps, near ourselves, and then we shall go and see him once a week.

Nan. [*overjoyed*] Aye, twice, three times a week my man. If that were the case, how happy should I be! But who can tell whether we shall know him again?

Jer. Heh! I dare say I shall know my son.

Nan. What, when he is dressed like an officer, all over gold lace, with his breast-plate and his sash!

Enter Boniface.

Bon. Good-morrow, neighbor Jeremy! Good-morrow, dame Goodacre!

Jer. How dost do, master Boniface?

[Shaking him by the hand

Bon. Well, you have received news from your son! Where is the letter? Let me read it to you.

Jer. We have not received it yet, and I am so impatient——

Bon. I suppose so, if it were only to have the honor of receiving a letter from a lieutenant. But how the plague did he get up so high? I cannot think, for my part. Besides, you never showed me his letter that mentions it; you got the exciseman to read it for you.

Nan. Then you did not hear that part, Mr. Boniface? Do tell him how it was, Jeremy.

Bon. Aye, do tell us about it, neighbor Jeremy.

Jer. Well, master Boniface, the matter was thus. In that last battle—at what d'ye call it—near—I never can think of the name; all his regiment was sadly mauled; most of the officers killed or wounded. My son, too, had received a ball, but never minded it. He rallied about three hundred men

as well as he could, [*with vehemence,*] led them up to the enemy, fell on with fixed bayonets, checked them so much that our people had time to retreat, and at last came off in good order at the head of fifty men. His general saw the whole, made him lieutenant on the spot, and promised to befriend him as long as he lived. Yes, master Boniface, it is all true. My son did just as I told you.

Bon. O, he is a brave youth. I saw that long long ago, while he was at school with me. When my boys were at play, it was Charley who led the gang; and, if there were a quarrel, he always sobered the stoutest of them. It was in him then, neighbor Jeremy, it is natural to him.

Jer. [*laughing.*] Aye, by the mass is it?

Enter Cicely, running.

Cic. Father! father! here is the letter, here it is; and another bank-note in it, I dare say, for it feels thick.

Jer. My good Charley! I am afraid he hurts himself to serve me.

Cic. And, father, some more wine too. The wine-merchant, he with the great red nose, was at the post-office at the same time with me, and had just got an order to send you another hamper full. Isaac has gone to fetch it.

Bon. A hamper full.

Jer. There will be some of that for you, master Boniface. But, mean time, we have a little of the last yet left. You shall drink with me while you

read the letter. Go, dame, and bring us that bottle and three glasses, with a bite of bread and cheese. We will make a luncheon of it here under the tree. Bring out a table, Cicely. Make haste.

Nan. and Cic. [*as they go out.*] But, pray now, don't read the letter without us.

Bon. Never fear, you know I cannot read before I break my fast.

SCENE II.

Jeremy, Boniface, Cicely [*who goes backward and forward.*]

Jer. Open the letter however, master Boniface, though we won't read it the more for that. And yet I am curious to know what he says about the peace, and if he will soon come and see us.

Bon. Of the peace, say you? Aye, they talk of it a good deal, but I cannot think it. They recruit and impress still as fast as ever. Why, this morning a sergeant with his party came into the town.

Jer. What, to recruit?

Bon. Ay, marry, the same that swears he enlisted Isaac, your daughter's sweetheart, at the fair in t'other town. Take care, neighbor Jeremy, he'll carry off Cicely's husband that is to be, if you don't take care. He is a slippery fellow, that sergeant.

Cic. [*coming near to listen.*] O, gracious, are you in earnest, master Boniface?

Jer. Do not be afraid, child, you know it was all a trick.

Bon. Nay, if you are sure of that. But come, let

us unseal—What a fine hand your son writes ! how fair and legible ! but he is indebted to me for that. [*He hems, and begins to read.*] 'Honored father—'

Jer. [*stretching his head towards Boniface to hear the letter.*] Ah, my good Charley !

Bon. 'As our regiment is ordered home, to remain in this country——'

Jer. Heaven be praised ! Then he will not cross the seas again. How happy my wife will be !

Bon. 'I hope shortly to have the happiness of seeing my family——'

Jer. O, I knew we should soon have him here.

Bon. 'Meantime I cannot give you greater satisfaction than by informing you how honorably I was treated a few days since——'

Jer. [*joyfully.*] Aye ? Let us hear, let us hear.

Bon. 'By the general, who politely invited me to dine with him,——'

Jer. My Charley to dine with him ? O, how the rest would stare ! all those great officers ! Well, well !

Bon. 'He held a particular conversation with me for a long time, and was pleased to pay me several compliments on my behavior during the war, which was certainly more than I deserved. In short, he asked me where I was born, and who was my father.'

Jer. What ! the general ask about me ? Well, what did he say ? let's hear ; quick, master Boniface.

Bon. 'I told him that you were a poor honest laboring man, but that I would not change you for

any father in the world, notwithstanding your condition.'

Jer. [*lifting up his hands.*] Heavenly goodness! I think I hear him.

Bon. —'The general was pleased with this expression of my duty towards you, and, filling his glass, drank your health in the presence of the whole table, requesting me to inform you that he had done himself that pleasure, and to assure you always of his friendship and good wishes.'

Jer. [*overjoyed.*] Now, is it possible, master Boniface? The general? some duke, no doubt.

Bon. Aye, you hear, he drank your health.

Jer. [*runs towards the cottage and calls,*] Wife! wife! never mind what you are doing there, but come hither; come quick.

Nan. [*from within the cottage.*] What is the matter, Jeremy?

Jer. Nay, come, you shall hear; come, I tell you, quick.

Enter Nancy.

Jer. [*kissing Nancy.*] O, my dear good wife, what a son you have given me!

[Nancy sets the wine and bread and cheese on the table. Boniface unconcernedly lays hold of it.

Nan. What is the matter, good now? I am all over in a flutter of joy. Is he coming home?

Jer. O, better than that. He dined with the general, d'ye know, and the general asked about our town, and about me, and my son told him that I was a poor laborer, but that he would not change me for all the fathers in the world. And with that

the general drank my health publicly, and promised me his friendship. [*Nancy claps her hands for joy.*] So now, my dear, we must drink the general's health. Come, dame, take you that glass; you t'other, master Boniface, and I'll have this. [*Takes off his hat.*] Fill all bumpers. Come, here's a health to the noble general.

Bon. 'Fore George, he does not drink better than this.

Jer. Hark ye, neighbor Boniface, you must write for me to my son, as how I have pledged the general's health in a bumper; and that he must thank him from me, and assure him that I love him dearly. Now don't forget. Nay, by the rights of the business, it would not be amiss, I think, to send a civil line or two, to himself.

Bon. Pooh, neighbor Jeremy, what dost talk on?

Nan. But Charley is coming home, is he? We shall see him soon. Eh?

Jer. Softly, child, you will hear that directly.

Nan. If he could come before our Cicely is married, it would be double happiness.

Jer. Patience, patience; master Boniface, go on.

Nan. Aye, aye; pray go on, mayhap he'll tell us something more.

Bon. [*sitting down again. Nancy goes to his side, and listens attentively.*] 'Invited me to dine with him'—Where did I leave off? 'Drank your health—Requesting me'—Aye, here it is—'Requesting me to inform you'—

Enter Cicely, weeping and sobbing.

Cic. Help, help, father! here are the soldiers.

Jer. How? What is the matter?

Cic. The recruiting sergeant is going to take away Isaac.

Bon. What, and the hamper of wine too, which he is bringing?

Nan. O my stars, this is a misfortune!

Cic. Do, father, go and see if you can release him. You are his father as well as mine. The sergeant will respect you, I'm sure. Every body respects you.

Jer. Silly child! as if every body lived in our town. But make yourselves easy; it is not so bad perhaps as you imagine. I will go and talk to them.

Cic. Do, father, and I will go with you; perhaps we may prevail on them. [*Exe. Jer. and Cic.*

SCENE III.

Nancy, Boniface.

Nan. Lackaday! I wish I could follow you. But now, master Boniface, you that can speak like an oration, why don't you go and hold forth to them?

Bon. No, no, dame, my business is to comfort. I cannot leave *you.*

Nan. [*with anxiety.*] Bless me! don't I hear a noise already in the town? I hope no harm will happen to my poor man. Do, neighbor Boniface, go and see what is the matter.

Bon. Why, you would not have me go? what, me?

Nan. Yes. You are a man of learning. You can talk to them something like.

Bon. Aye, so much the worse. These blades would desire no better sport than to fall foul of men of learning, like me. 'Sblood, keep to your books, they would say. And then again, as I am a little hasty, who can tell what might happen. I should better never have meddled with learning, that is plain.

Nan. Come, you are one of our best friends, and would you not help us?

Bon. Nay, but have a little moderation after all, Gammer. Think of my profession. I can give you counsels and consolations in English and in Latin, as much as you will; but for helping folks, it does not lay in my way.

Nan. Well, I could not have expected this of you. I see I must hobble after them myself. [*Goes out.*

Bon. [*alone.*] Yes, yes, go and push myself among a parcel of young swaggerers! I have only twenty brats in my school, and those young monkeys play tricks on me from morning to night. What would I be among a score of great hulky fellows? I should have no rods there to frighten them. I think it is much better to finish this bottle, and then I can read the rest of the letter. I long to know——

[Fills his glass, and reads to himself.

'The first of next month?'——Why that was yesterday. [*Continues to read eagerly.*] 'The second?'——To be here on the second day of the month? Heh! they'll be quite happy. [*Drinks the wine.*] There is not a moment to be lost. [*Fills again and drinks.*] I'll run after them and bring them back. [*Fills and drinks a third time.*] The time is precious.

[Holding up the bottle and seeing it empty, he rises in a hurry, as if to run after them, and calls,]

Jeremy! Nancy! They are too far off; they do not hear me. Well, this news will make it up for me with Nancy. It would be a pity to quarrel with such good folks, especially just now, when they have a fresh hamper of such nectar as this.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Jeremy, Isaac, Nancy, Sergeant, Country People. [*Cicely and Soldiers standing by.*]

Serg. [*to the soldiers.*] Come, no more of this whining; take him before a justice.

Country People. You won't take the man by force, will you?

Isaac. Aye, let him if he dare.

Serg. You may talk as you will; this is my man. [*Slapping on his pocket.*] Here is my beating order, and that is enough.

Isaac. Beating order? you have no order to trepan folks.

Jer. [*making a sign to the country people to be silent.*] Hark'ye, Mr. Sergeant, good words go a great way.

Serg. Good words? I desire no other. Let's see of what sort your's are.

Jer. I'll tell you what, sergeant, I love my country with all my heart; and, if the war were not almost over, and every thing settled; if we were in any danger, and there were a real occasion——

Serg. Is that all you have to say?

Jer. Nay, sergeant, only hear me.

Serg. [*leaning on his cane.*] Well, let us hear.

Jer. This young man is my son-in-law, that is to be; but what of that? If things were as I told you, I should be the first to say, carry him off. For what can there be more our duty, than to fight for our country. Take myself too, I would say. My head is grey, it is true, and my face covered with wrinkles, but I am neither too old, nor too weak to fight as well as another. My son's noble bravery has made me strong again, [*with vehemence.*] I will fight as long as I can carry a firelock, and, when old age and weakness overpower me, I will hearten up the young fellows round me to behave themselves bravely. If I see any of them draw back, I'll throw myself in his way, and stop his flight; or if he will run, he shall pass over the carcase of a poor old man. Yes, upon my soul, sergeant, I would say exactly so, if things were at that pass.

Serg. And I would say, my good old gentleman, you don't know what you are talking about.

Jer. [*advancing a step.*] Hark'ye, sergeant, mayhap *you* don't know what you are doing. If you give yourself airs with us, we'll find your betters somewhere; and if I write to my son who is a lieutenant——

Serg. You a son that is a lieutenant? But, if you had a dozen, I can only say, that I must have master Isaac here, or the smart-money.

Isaac. Aye, aye, this is a fine way to come and get folks' money. You a king's man ?

Serg. I do no more than the king does, in regard to your money, except that I take the trouble to come for it myself. Two guineas, or he must march.

Nan. Nay, sergeant, for pity's sake——

Ser. Pity ! we soldiers have much to do with pity. How would it be if the enemy were among you ? No quarter then, but your money or your lives.

Nan. [*shuddering.*] O dear me !

Serg. No, no, we have not much time for pity. Broken arms and legs are nothing among us—But come, we are losing time. Hark'ye, you must find the money, or the man is mine. Come along ; march. [*Goes off with the soldiers and Isaac.*]

Jer. Follow him, neighbors, to the justice's, if he goes there. I'll be after you presently. [*Cicely and the country people go out.*]

SCENE II.

Jeremy, Nancy. Enter Boniface [*out of breath.*]

Jer. Ah, master Boniface, you left us in the lurch.

Bon. What a plague ! I have been running after you this quarter of an hour.

Jer. What is the matter ! You seem all alive.

Bon. Matter ? the matter is here, gaffer. [*striking the letter.*] Why, your son is to be here to-day, man.

Jer. To-day, master Boniface ?

Bon. Only hear. [*he reads.*] ' Our regiment is ordered into quarters, and, the first of next month, the company, to which I belong, will march through

your town.' Look ye there, neighbor Jeremy; the first, that is, as one should say, yesterday.

Nan. Is it possible? Yesterday? And not here yet?

Bon. Stop, stop. Hear what follows. [*reads.*] 'Or, if not that day, on the second, at farthest. I shall ask permission of the commanding officer to go and see you as we pass by.'

Jer. Then my dear boy comes at last! Wife, I will go and meet him. I'll go as far as the great close. I'll stretch out my arms towards him, and call to him, My son, my dear son.

Nan. Nay, don't leave me, pr'ythee. How can I keep pace with you, being so feeble? Then he will think that I do not love him as well as you do.

Jer. Aye, aye, stay where you are, neighbor.

Bon. Only let me have a guinea, quick.

Jer. A guinea? For what?

Bon. To keep the sergeant in discourse about the two guineas which he asks, and then when your son comes——

Jer. Ah, right. Here, my good friend, run, and see what you can do. For my part, I can think of nothing but my son at this moment. [*Boniface goes out, running.*]

Nan. Pray, Jeremy, don't you leave me. I could not stay behind. You had better get up on this little hill. You will see farther from the top of it.

Jer. You are right, my dear. Marry, I am all on fire with joy and impatience.

Nan. [*while Jeremy goes up the hill.*] Heaven be praised, then my son has come home again. I shall

see him once more, after so many long years. Dear! how my heart beats! my joy was great when he came into the world, but how much greater now! [*She calls to Jeremy.*] Well, my dear man, do you see nothing of him?

Jer. [*on tiptoe, holding his hands over his eyes.*] Not yet, honey; the sun dazzles me.

Nan. I hope all this joy may not be out of season. Step down, and lend me a hand to get up. I shall see farther than you.

Jer. What a dust! Is it a flock of sheep? No; I see the glistening of their arms. They are coming down by yon hill. It is they, my dear, it is they.

Nan. Do you see our boy?

Jer. He cannot be far off. Eh! who is this that comes galloping towards us through the town? [*he throws up his hat.*] Huzza! wife, here he comes on horseback. Our own Charley.

Nan. Good lack! I am out of my wits with joy. O, I must go to meet him. Gracious! here he comes!

Enter Lieutenant Goodacre [*as Jeremy comes down from the hill.*]

Lt. G. My dear father.

[Embraces his father and mother.

Jer. Ah, my good son! God bless you, my dear boy! The sight of you makes me shed tears of joy. You have, at least, a thankful father.

Nan. O, that you have, my dear child, and a thankful mother too.

Lt. G. Why do you talk of thanks, my honored parents? It is I who have obligations to you.

Jer. No, Charles, I will say it before all the world, you have repaid me much more than I have ever given you. You are all my comfort, and the happiness of my old age. It is you that keep me alive and prolong my days.

Nan. We can never make you amends for the happiness which you afford us.

Lt. G. And is it not the greatest happiness that I can enjoy myself? It would be none, if your affection did not make you share it with me. Yes, my dear and honored parents; I have never ceased to think of you in every circumstance of life. When

any good fortune has happened to me, I have thought very little of the advantage that fell to myself from it. The greatest pleasure that I felt at such times was, in thinking of the satisfaction that it would occasion to you. But in no part of my life have I enjoyed so great, so sensible a happiness as at this moment when I see both your eyes filled with tears. [*Taking each of them by the hand, and looking at them by turns.*] O my worthy parents, I can never satisfy myself with seeing you. But compose yourselves. I cannot stay very long with you now. I shall return shortly, and spend a few days with you. Well, how do you go on? How do you pass your old age? How do you live? Where is my sister that I have not seen since she was in her cradle? Let me see her.

Jer. She is a good girl, and gives us vast satisfaction. We are going to marry her, if you approve it. But I'll bring her hither directly. [*Going, he returns.*] And yet I am grieved to tell you——

Nan. But for you she might be very unhappy. Our intended son-in-law, my dear child——

Jer. Has been trepanned by a sergeant, who luckily is still here. Before he releases him, he expects two guineas; and they have been promised to him, to keep him on the spot, as we were in hopes that you would come in the mean time. How happy it is that you arrived here to-day.

Lt. G. Well, go, father, and bring him hither, without telling him or my sister that I am here.

Jer. Nay, how shall I refrain? I would much

rather cry out to every body that I meet, He is here, he is here. [*Goes out.*

Lt. G. [*looking around him.*] How charming is this retreat! Now indeed I know the place of my birth. Yonder is the cottage which I have so often sighed after. There the great tree, under the shade of which we used to sit with our neighbors on fine summer evenings; and here the hill which I chose for the scene of my sports. O happy years of my childhood! Of every spot that I see around me, there is none, my dear mother, that does not remind me of marks of your affection. But you seem thoughtful?

Nan. My joy is so great I can hardly give it vent. If I were alone, I could cry for an hour. Besides too, I think——

Lt. G. What, my dear mother?

Nan. That we are not equal now. You are too much above us.

Lt. G. I too much above you! O, banish that thought. Are not the ties of nature the most sacred? Am I not convinced that I cannot be nearer to any persons upon earth than to you and my father? And should I not in return feel a more sincere affection to my parents than to any other persons in the universe? Believe me, I shall continue to love and respect you the same as ever.

Enter Cicely, hastily to her mother, without observing Lieut. Goodacre.

Cic. What is the matter, mother? Why did my father send me here in such a hurry? [*Perceiving Lt. G. she draws back.*] O goodness! an officer!

Lt. G. [*asi. to Nancy.*] Mother, is that my sister?

[Nancy makes signs to him in the affirmative. He goes to kiss her.

What a charming countenance!

Cic. [*struggling.*] O fie, sir, be quiet!

Nan. What, Cicely, to your brother?

Lt. G. How surprised she seems! Yes, Cicely, your brother, and I hope a brother whom you love.

Cic. Dear mother! what this fine officer? Is he my brother Charley?

Lt. G. [*kissing her.*] What amiable innocence!

Cic. [*running to her mother, quite overjoyed.*] O, mother, we have nothing to fear now. Isaac will soon be released.

SCENE III.

Jeremy, Nancy, Lieut. Goodacre, Boniface, Cicely, Isaac, Sergeant, Country People.

Jer. [*pointing to his son*] There, sergeant, there is the gentleman who will pay you the two guineas.

Serg. [*surprised.*] How is this? an officer?

[Takes off his hat.

Lt. G. You say, sir, that you have enlisted this man; where is your beating order?

Serg. Here, sir.

[Presenting it to him with some confusion.

Lt. G. I see the number of your corps. What officer commands your party?

Serg. Captain Marshall, sir.

Lt. G. [*having looked over the paper.*] Why this is but a copy. Well, I know your captain, and think I should know you too. Your dealing with this man

does not seem to have been fair. I am afraid that you have abused the honorable profession of a soldier, and looked upon it as allowing you a privilege to extort poor people's money. I shall write to your captain, and meantime shall be answerable for this man's appearance. [*Exit Serg.*] Come hither, sister. Is this your intended spouse? He is a clever young fellow. I like Cicely's choice very much.

Isaac. You are very good, captain, to approve it, as I am no more than a husbandman.

Lt. G. And what was my father? Are not you born of honest parents?

Nan. Yes indeed, my dear son, as honest as any in the parish.

Lt. G. Well, I shall not be happy unless I am at your wedding. I shall take all the expense of it upon myself.

Country People. [*with a murmur of approbation.*] That is very generous indeed.

Lt. G. But do I not see Mr. Boniface?

Bon. Yes, captain, much at your service.

Lt. G. Ah! one of my oldest acquaintances [*shaking hands with him.*] I am sorry to have made him angry so often formerly.

Bon. That is all past. The present does me much honor. Do you know, captain, that it was I who read all your letters for this good couple? I have spread your reputation through the whole country. Indeed I came in myself for some share of it.

Lt. G. Yes, Mr. Boniface, I acknowledge it with

pleasure. Your instructions have not been entirely useless to me in my advancement.

[Boniface bows affectedly, and rises with a pedantic toss o the head.

Bon. [*aside.*] Who would think that old Noll Boniface had flogged a captain!

Lt. G. Father, do these good people belong to the village?

Jer. Yes, child, they are our neighbors, and have been very kind to us in our old age.

Lt. G. I am heartily obliged to you, my good friends.

Country people. [*approaching familiarly.*] How plain and affable he is! he does not think himself above us. Kindly welcome home, captain. We have always been glad to hear news from you when you were abroad. [*Lt. G. takes each of them by the hand.*

Jer. Every thing that I see of you, my dear son, pleases me highly, and convinces me, that whatever I heard to your advantage was true. You certainly have behaved youself as a worthy soldier.

Lt. G. I hope so, father; and I am indebted for it to your good advice, and that of my mother. There is no part of the world, I thank heaven where my memory is hateful; I flatter myself that, in many parts, it is respected. [*Looking at his watch.*] But my time is almost expired. I must leave you, my dear parents.

Nan. What, already? so soon?

Jer. Stop a little longer. We have scarcely had time to look at you.

Lt. G. I must absolutely join our division again.

Be assured, that my heart alone would be sufficient to keep me here, if my duty did not call me away. But I shall ask you one thing before I leave you.

Jer. and Nan. Any thing, child, any thing.

Lt. G. Well then, my dear parents, come and live with me. You shall command my pay, such as it is, in the same manner as you ever command my esteem and affection.

Jer. and Nan. My dear son——

Lt. G. You hesitate? Ah, your consent must must be quite voluntary. It would be no happiness to me, if it ceased to be so to you.

Jer. Hear me, my dear child. We are old, and cannot live long. Let us die here, where we have spent all our days. Let us die in our cottage; that spot is dear to us, since in it you were born. Only come and make us happy with the sight of you, now and then; it is all which we desire.

Lt. G. O certainly, certainly, father.

Nan. And we, my dear son, will go to see you in return. They will be days of happiness to us when we see you, and we shall never cease to bless Heaven for having given us such a son.

FASHIONABLE EDUCATION.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. VINCENT, *a particular friend to the children.*
MRS. COURTLY.
LEONORA, *her niece.*
HILARY, *her nephew.*
DANDIPRAT, *a dancing-master.*
FANNY, *a waiting maid.*

The SCENE *is in the house of Mrs. Courtly.*

SCENE I.

Mrs. Courtly and Mr. Vincent.

Mrs. C.

NO, I cannot forgive you, Mr. Vincent. What, not come and see your beloved friends, nor me, these five years past!

Mr. V. Consider, my good lady, the inevitable duties of my parish, the bad state in which my health is, and the fear of accidents upon the road.

Mrs. C. What, forty miles! a very long journey truly!

Mr. V. Long to me, who cannot easily change place. My bodily infirmities no longer permit me to be gadding, and especially so far from home.

Mrs. C. And pray, to what powerful motive, Mr. Vincent, do we owe this instance of your resolution?

Mr. V. To the great desire which I had of seeing Leonora and her brother, once more, I may say, before I die.

Mrs. C. Ah! there is a fine girl! Leonora! One might come to view her from the furthest corner of the world! O, such an understanding and vivacity!

Mr. V. Indeed, you make me very anxious, Mrs. Courtly, to behold her. Pray, where is she? I long to embrace her.

Mrs. C. She has not left her toilet yet.

Mr. V. Not at this late hour! And Hilary, why is he not come from school? I thought he would have been here long ago, and waiting to receive me.

Mrs. C. You remember, it was a little late when your arrival was announced last night. The servants have been very busy all this morning, and my niece's waiting-woman could not leave her.

Mr. V. Pray oblige me, by despatching some one instantly for Hilary; and, in the interval, I will go up stairs and see his sister.

Mrs. C. No, no, Mr. Vincent; the surprise of seeing you might overcome her spirits; I will prepare her for the interview. [*She goes out.*

Mr. V. [*alone.*] As far as I can see into the matter, Mrs. Courtly brings up her niece by the plan which regulated her own education, and permits her to employ a deal of time in setting off her person to the best advantage, like a doll intended for

the window of a toy-shop. Happy, if these trifles have not caused her to neglect the cultivation of her understanding!

Enter Mrs. Courtly.

Mrs. C. I have sent for Hilary; and Leonora is coming down this instant. She has but one feather more to settle.

Mr. V. How! one feather! Can you suppose that I care about a feather more or less? Should not her anxiety to see me be as great as mine is?

Mrs. C. Certainly it should, and is; but then her wish to give you pleasure——

Mr. V. Possibly it will not be her feathers that will do that; but, if I recollect, you told me that you had sent to fetch your nephew?

Mrs. C. [*somewhat piqued.*] O, my nephew! You will have time enough for Hilary.

Mr. V. You speak as if I were not to expect great things from him.

Mrs. C. He is far from being vicious; but he will not attend to my instructions on the subject of good-breeding.

Mr. V. What, is he unpolished, wild, or rustic?

Mrs. C. No, not that. They tell me that his head is well stored with useful knowledge, as they call it; but that *je ne sçai quoi*, which well-bred people possess, and that *bon ton*——

Mr. V. If that be all he wants, he is not a great way from perfection;—but his heart?

Mrs. C. I think it neither good nor bad; but Leonora! how accomplished she is! what en-

chanting manners! As for Hilary, we do not see each other often.

Mr. V. And why not?

Mrs. C. For fear of taking him from his beloved studies; and because, when he comes here, he pays no heed to what I tell him of the method of living in the fashionable world. Besides, he cannot express himself with any sort of grace. I sometimes carry him into the company of ladies, and he never has a handsome word to say.

Mr. V. Because, as I suppose, the conversation turns upon matters to which he is quite a stranger.

Mrs. C. But surely a well-bred youth should never be a stranger to such topics as are started in the company of ladies!

Mr. V. A respectful silence suits his present age; and it is his business to be silent, and thus learn to speak in future, when his turn comes.

Mrs. C. And would you make the youth a doll, that is not to have motion till his wheels are on? But you shall hear my Leonora talk; she does it with such ease! such spirit! such vivacity! There is no such thing as following her, when once she sets a going.

Mr. V. We shall see which of them will be most entitled to my love. You cannot but remember, how I promised, at their father's death, to look upon them as my own. I will perform this sacred duty. As I cannot tell how long I have to live, I am come to see these children, and to know their different characters; which I design to study, so that I may

regulate the final disposition of my fortune accordingly in their favor.

Mrs. C. Such proceeding agrees entirely with every former token of your gratitude and generosity. My brother, even in his grave, feels your beneficence; and how can I express my obligation to you as I ought, for Leonora and her brother?

Mr. V. What you call beneficence, dear lady, in me, is no more than duty. Your esteemed and worthy father trusted to my care the education of his son, your brother; and this brother, anxious for his tutor's happiness, presented me the living which I possess; and, as I have no children, his belong to me, and have a right, even while I am living, and much more after my death, to all the worldly fortune that I possess, and which I study to increase for their advantage, and for no other purpose.

Mrs. C. I can easily believe you; and in that case, Leonora, as the loveliest——

Mr. V. If I make distinctions, it will not be on account of frivolous or outside beauty; but superior virtue, or superior merit in them, will obtain the preference.

Mrs. C. Ah! here Leonora comes.

Enter Leonora, dressed in all the extravagance of fashion.

Mr. V. [*in astonishment.*] How! is this Leonora?

Mrs. C. You are surprised, I see, to find her at first sight so captivating. [*To Leonora.*] You have made us wait a little, my sweet girl.

Leo. [*making a ceremonious curtsy to Mr. Vincent.*] Because the servant could not place my feathers to my liking, notwithstanding she moved them half a dozen times. I sent her off at last, quite out of humor, and did every thing myself. I hope I see you well, sir.

Mr. V. [*going towards her and affectionately holding out his hand.*] And I hope, my dear Leonora—

[Leonora turns away, and seems indifferent.

Well!—are you unwilling to consider me as if I were your father?

Mrs. C. Yes, my dear; your father and your benefactor. I request [*to Mr. V.*] you will excuse her: she has always been brought up in modesty, and I have constantly enjoined her a reserve.

Mr. V. She would not surely have violated either, by receiving me as children do a father. I must likewise tenderly reproach her for the circumstance of having staid so long up stairs, while I was all impatience to behold her.

Leo. Pardon me, dear sir; I was not fit to come before you with propriety.

Mr. V. But surely, a young lady should always be fit to come before a plain man, as I am, with propriety! A modest and decent undress is all that she wants, for such a purpose, when at home.

Mrs. C. You are right; but, to receive a guest like Mr. Vincent, the respect which she owes you whispered the necessity of putting on——

Mr. V. One feather less; and might have whis-

pered the propriety of being eager to come forth and meet a friend who travels forty miles to see her. Yes, I own, my heart would have been infinitely more delighted to behold my children—for the tenderness with which I think of them at all times and the gratitude which I owe their father, makes them such, and therefore I repeat it—to behold my children run with open arms to meet me!

Mrs. C. But the awe which seized her at first sight of you——

Mr. V. Let us drop the subject. When you see me next, you will receive me more affectionately. Won't you, Leonora? You are not displeased that I speak thus freely to you? I was used to such language in your childhood; and the five long years which I have passed, without once seeing you, have made no alteration in my heart. I hope, even when you are married, that I shall have permission to continue such a sweet familiarity.

Leo. It will be doing me much honor.

Mr. V. O, no more of these same ceremonious compliments! Say only that it will give you pleasure. But how much you are altered for the better since I saw you last! An elegant appearance, easy manners, and a carriage——

Mrs. C. O, quite charming! quite adorable!

Mr. V. And yet all this is nothing, if one wants the grace of modesty, the charm of affability, the sweet expression of goodness upon the countenance, and that perpetual source of pleasure, a well-cultivated understanding.

Mrs. C. Yes,that sort of cultivation which can only be pursued by intercourse with fashionable people.

Mr. V. Fashionable people, madam ? And is Leonora to spend her life with such ? I have nothing left to wish her, if she have but those endearing qualities which may obtain her honor amongst a well-chosen circle of acquaintances, at times indeed abroad, but commonly at home ; insuring her the approbation of her friends, and of her own heart.

Mrs. C. Yes, yes ; that is always understood. I mean that she should learn what sort of conduct will procure her honor and respect from such as know what life is, as we say. Come, Leonora, let us hear you play some pretty piece on your piano.

Leo. No, dear aunt ; it might not be acceptable to Mr. Vincent.

Mr. V. Not acceptable, my dear child ! I am quite delighted when I hear good music ; and think no amusement more proper for you.

Mrs. C. What more worthy of our admiration, than those charming sciences called drawing, music, dancing, and perhaps some few others ? Leonora, give us that sweet air of signor Squalini's composing.

[Leonora goes to her piano with a discontented air, fingers the keys, and begins a sonata.

No, no ; you must sing too, Leonora. She has such a voice, Mr. Vincent !—so sweet !—You will hear it. If you knew how much applause she got for her performance at the concert, you would be perfectly astonished. You must know, however,

she is a little vain; and one must sometimes kneel, or not a note——

Mr. V. I hope I shall obtain a note, without proceeding to that ceremony. Shan't I, Leonora?

Leo. Sir, your commands are sufficient at any time.

Mr. V. No, my dear; I do not command, I only request.

Leo. [*in a whisper to her aunt, while looking for the air.*] I am indebted for all this to you!

Mrs. C. [*whispering to Leo.*] For heaven's sake, Leonora, seem more cheerful; and do every thing which you are asked. Your fortune, very possibly, depends upon it.

Mr. V. If your voice, my love, is not so clear as you could wish, no matter; only sing your best, and you are sure to please me.

[*Leonora plays and sings the following words.*]

Sweetly-smelling flower,
Thus waking with the morning hour,
Go to my Laura's breast, and grace
With added fragrance that already fragrant place;
So thou wilt bloom indeed:—
But like a useless weed
If on the stalk here thou remain,
Thy beauty will decay;
Thy fragrance pass away,
And thy bright colors glow in vain.

Mrs. C. [*clapping her hands.*] Bravo! bravissimo!

Mr. V. In truth it is not much amiss, considering she is but a child. However, I supposed that I should have heard a song containing something of

the principles with which, no doubt, you study to inspire her.

Mrs. C. How, dear sir! do you not perceive the moral of it? [*She sings.*]

If on the stalk here thou remain,
Thy beauty will decay;
Thy fragrance pass away;
And thy bright colors glow in vain.

Which is as much as to say, our young ladies should come forth and mingle with the world, if they would turn their knowledge to advantage, and not die shut up in their own houses.

Mr. V. Trust me, my dear lady, it is much rather there than elsewhere that worthy husbands will be glad to find them. But what is this?

[Casting his eyes upon a drawing.

Mrs. C. That is one of Leonora's drawings. Do not you find it charming?

Mr. V. It is not bad indeed, if Leonora did it all without the assistance of her master.

Mrs. C. Why, to say the truth, sir, he has touched it up a little.

Mr. V. My opinion here again is, that Leonora would have shown more judgment in selecting somewhat of a different subject; as for instance, if, instead of representing thus a sleeping shepherdess surprised by a filthy fawn, she had applied her pencil to set forth some virtuous action; *that* would have improved her hand as much, while it improved her heart still more.

Enter Fanny.

Fan. Sir, your portmanteau is arrived. Where will you have it put? In your apartment?

Mr. V. Do you mean, my good lady, that I shall have my lodgings with you?

Mrs. C. Certainly; and by accepting them, you will do me no less honor than I myself have pleasure in the offer.

Mr. V. You oblige me. Therefore, with permission, I will see if every thing is right, and return immediately. [*Exit.*

Leo. He is gone at last, then! is he?

Mrs. C. Softly, softly, Leonora! he may chance to hear you.

Leo. Let him hear me, if he please. I am so vexed, I could destroy my drawings, tear my music book, and dash my instrument to pieces.

Mrs. C. Be composed, my dear! you have occasion now for all your moderation.

Leo. It is enough, I think, that I showed my moderation in his presence. You yourself both saw and heard him.

Mrs. C. People of his age always have many oddities.

Leo. Why then expose me to them? You should not have said a word about my singing, aunt. I did not like to sing. This always comes of your desire to show me to the best advantage, as you say; and though you see the mischief, you will repeat it when he comes again.

Mrs. C. My dearest Leonora, be persuaded;

you do not know perhaps that your fortune in the world depends on Mr. Vincent.

Leo. What ! my fortune ?

Mrs. C. Yes, indeed. Must I inform you how much you are indebted to his bounty ?

Leo. O, I know ! as far as certain petty presents amount, which he sends me now and then. But surely I could do without his presents !

Mrs. C. Ah, my dearest child ! without him you would be exceedingly unhappy. What your father left you is a very trifle ; and my income no great matter. With the assistance of these means alone, it was not possible that I should have given you such an education as you have received.

Leo. And is it possible that I am so indebted to him ? Does he likewise show himself a friend and benefactor to my brother ?

Mrs. C. Yes ; it is he who pays his board and education.

Leo. I was never told of this.

Mrs. C. Since you never wanted any thing, what need was there to tell you of it ? You observe, by this, of what importance you should think it, to keep watch upon your conduct, and behave to Mr. Vincent with respect. But, my dear, this is not all ; he has come expressly for the purpose of observing you and Hilary, before he makes his will, and gives you his estate accordingly—to each, as he supposes you to deserve it.

Leo. O, how sorry I am now that I seemed so vexed and fretted in his presence !

Mrs. C. He is certainly a worthy man; but still was much to blame in hearing with such coldness your sweet voice, and not appearing charmed with your piano. But, however that may be, you must absolutely seek to please him, or your brother will obtain a preference in his will.

Leo. Alas! he merits it much more than I do.

Mrs. C. More? You have too mean an opinion of yourself, my sweetest, if you think so! Besides, if he should really obtain a preference, what would be your destiny? A man can always make his way through life, but what resources can a woman have?

Leo. What, indeed! Your argument convinces me I should have learnt things much more necessary than the use of a piano, dancing, or even drawing.

Mrs. C. Why, you simpleton! with such a fortune, as by Mr. Vincent's favor you have reason to hope, what can you desire in preference to the arts of shining in a fashionable circle? Mr. Vincent must be won; and, with a little complaisance, if you but show it, you may do whatever you think proper with him.

Enter Fanny.

Fan. Mr. Dandiprat, the dancing-master, madam.

Mrs. C. Well, desire him to walk up. [*Ex. Fan.*

Leo. No, aunt; let him be sent away to-day, I beg, or I shall again fret Mr. Vincent.

Mrs. C. He must absolutely see you dance, you move with so much ease, you will charm him, I am certain. [*Going to the door.*] Mr. Dandiprat, come in.

Enter Dandiprat.

Mrs. C. I appeal to you, sir; does not Leonora dance like an angel?

Dan. [*bowing.*] Absolutely, madam.

Mrs. C. Very likely I shall have a friend come here to see her dance a little. You will oblige me, therefore, if you make her show her skill as much as possible, to please him.

Dan. Certainly, madam; and my own skill too, you may depend on it.

Enter Mr. Vincent.

Mrs. C. Apropos; for here he comes. A chair for Mr. Vincent. Here,—here, on this sofa, my dear sir. You are come in time for Leonora's dancing lesson; you must see how she performs. You would take her for a zephyr! Mr. Dandiprat, pray let your pupil dance the new allemand.

Leo. I cannot dance it by myself.

Mrs. C. Fear nothing! Mr. Dandiprat will dance with you; and I will hum the tune. Come, never fear! I will keep good time.

Mr. V. But what hinders us from having a minuet? I like that best, and beg to have it.

Dan. I shall not perform it with grace, if I must play as well as dance.

Mr. V. It is not your performance which we consider, but that of your pupil.

Dan. You would judge much better of her merit in a grand chaconne.

Mr. V. Chaconne! what is that?

Dan. It is the higher style of dancing.

Mr. V. But Leonora never means to figure at the Opera-house. I want a minuet.

Dan. As you please, sir. Come, miss ; a minuet.

[Leonora dances ; Dandiprat moves with her, playing on his kit, interrupting his music now and then with instructions.

Your head a little higher.—Shoulders back.—Let your arms play freely.—Sink.—One, two, three. —Your partner.—Look at me.

Mr. V. [*when the minuet is finished.*] Come, this is tolerable, Leonora. Sir, your lesson, if you please, is finished for to-day.

[Dandiprat makes a ceremonious bow to the company, and leaves the room.

Leo. [*whispering to Mrs. Courtly.*] Well, aunt, you see what compliments I have had.

Mrs. C. And is it possible, my dear good sir, that you are not enchanted, ravished, transported? Surely your attention was diverted; or perhaps you are not yet recovered from the fatigue your journey has occasioned?

Mr. V. I beg your pardon, madam. I have already signified to Leonora how I liked her dancing; but you would not truly see me in a transport at her merit in this way? No; I reserve my ecstasy for merit much more proper to excite it.

Enter Hilary, running into the room to Mr. Vincent, and embracing him with ardor.

Hil. O, my dear, dear Mr. Vincent! my good friend and father! how rejoiced I am to see you!

Mrs. C. How the boy rushes in! do you mean to stifle Mr. Vincent?

Mr. V. Let him do it, my good madam! for the transports of his joy delight me more than cold ceremonious salutations. Yes, my dearest Hilary, come here, and let me press you to my heart. What pleasing recollections you awaken within me! Yes, these open features are the living image of your dear departed father!

Mrs. C. Why not put your best clothes on? Do people see friends in that trim?

Hil. But, aunt, it would have cost me half an hour at least to change my dress, and I never should have had the patience to delay so long the pleasure of seeing Mr. Vincent.

Mr. V. And I too, my dear boy, was quite impatient, and thought every minute half an hour between the time of my arrival and this moment.

Mrs. C. Well, sir; have you nothing to say to me or Leonora? You have not so much as wished us a good morning.

Hil. Pardon me, dear aunt! I was so glad, I did not know what I was doing. And do you forgive me too, dear sister, [*holding out his hand*] if, without intention, I have displeased you. Have I, Leonora?

Leo. [*half offended.*] No, sir.

Mr. V. Excuse him, madam, upon my account. I should be sorry to be the occasion of reproach to him.

Mrs. C. [*aside.*] I can hold no longer!—Be so kind, good sir, as to excuse me; I have several orders to give the servants.

Mr. V. Do not confine yourself on my account.

Mrs. C. [*whispering to Leo.*] You will hardly stay to hear their insupportable discourse!—[*Aloud.*] Come, Leonora, I have some employment for you.

Leo. No, aunt, I will stay with Mr. Vincent, if he will please to let me.

Mr. V. Let you, my dear child! I shall be glad to have you with us.

[Mrs. Courtly goes out in manifest vexation.

SCENE II.

Mr. Vincent, Leonora, Hilary.

Mr. V. Well, Hilary; is your master pleased with your behavior and improvement?

Hil. He himself, sir, is the proper person to

answer the question. One thing however I can say, that I am pretty well established in his favor.

Mr. V. What are you studying at present ?

Hil. Latin, Greek, and Geography ; the history of England, and the Mathematics.

Leo. [*aside.*] Here are many things which I scarcely know by name !

Mr. V. And pray tell me, do you like them ?

Hil. O, the more I learn, the more I wish to go on learning ; and am not the lowest in my class, either.

Mr. V. Then too, your drawing, music, dancing——

Hil. Those too I am learning ; but apply myself much more, this sultry weather, to the music-master and drawing, as the doctor says I must not exercise myself too violently. In return, when winter comes, I shall apply myself more closely to my dancing, when a deal of jumping will be comfortable.

Mr. V. Why your plan, I must acknowledge, seems well laid.

Hil. Besides, sir, I shall never give much time to dancing ; hardly more than what the doctor lets me have for recreation. The essential thing, he tells me, is to form my heart, and cultivate my understanding, so that I may live with honor in the world, become a useful member of society, and make myself by those means happy.

Mr. V. [*embracing him.*] You are in the right, dear boy !

Leo. [*aside.*] If these are so essential, how has my aunt neglected me!

Hil. And yet, dear sir, though you embrace and love me so, I am not perhaps so good as you imagine.

Mr. V. How?

Hil. I am very giddy, and I waste my time. I cannot rid myself of several exceptionable habits; and, for want of thought, relapse into those very faults for which I have so frequently been sorry.

Mr. V. And will you still relapse into them?

Hil. Not if I have my thoughts about me; but I find it very difficult to keep in memory, at all times, my good resolutions.

Mr. V. I am very glad to find that you can discern these faults yourself. To acknowledge that we do wrong is something akin to doing well. What think you, Leonora?

Leo. I believe I am neither giddy, nor yet wasteful of my time; nor have I any of my brother's faults.

Mr. V. Then I suppose you have other faults?

Leo. I have never heard my aunt say that I had any.

Mr. V. She should indeed know, and be the first to notice them; but affection too often blinds us, so that we can see no faults in those whom we love. I do not mean to vex you, by saying this, believe me.

Leo. [*aside.*] What a man! He flatters Hilary, and answers me with nothing but vexatious speeches!

Mr. V. Wait here a little. I will go and see if my servant has unpacked my trunks. I have something for you, and shall soon be back. [*Exit.*

Hil. Yes, yes; we will wait here for you. Do not stay long.

Leo. I fancy that he may keep his presents to himself! They must be charming things indeed which *he* has to give us!

Hil. What? Dear sister! does not every thing which you have in your apartment, and even upon your person, come from our dear benefactor? If he have the veriest trifle in his trunk to give me, I should still be charmed in thinking of his bounty.

Leo. Possibly you might; but I am so angry with him, with myself, and with my aunt—that I could find it in my heart to quarrel with all the world.

Hil. What, with me too, among the rest? What ails you, my dear sister?

[Taking Leonora by the hand.

Leo. Had you been so mortified!

Hil. So mortified! Have you been mortified then, sister? Who has mortified you? Not my aunt, for she will hardly let you breathe for fear of your catching cold; and would, I fancy, suffer you to tread upon her, if to touch the ground would hurt you.

Leo. Yes; but Mr. Vincent! he is so captious!

Hil. How you talk! I think him, on the contrary, indulgent and good-natured.

Leo. I have done nothing to his liking. When I sung and danced, I could not please him; and my

drawing had no better fortune. He despises every thing that I know; and speaks of merit much more calculated to excite his approbation, than skill in dancing.

Hil. Between you and me, I think him in the right.

Leo. In the right! Then my aunt is in the wrong, according to your notion, is she? What does he mean by merit much more calculated to excite his admiration than skill in dancing?

Hil. I can tell you, and yet not be very learned.

Leo. O yes! you indeed! Well then, what is it?

Hil. Tell me, Leonora, do you ever read?

Leo. Yes, doubtless, when I have time.

Hil. And what?

Leo. Why, plays, before I go to see them; and a great variety of songs, that I may sing them to my master.

Hil. Fine reading, truly, for one of your age! And do you not think that you might have books much more instructive?

Leo. If I might, what time have I to read them! It is full one o'clock before I have breakfasted, and put on my morning dress. Then comes Mr. Quaver; and, when he has left me, Mr. Dandiprat. I dine at four; and after that, dress for company which we receive at home; or else go out a visiting, and then the day is over.

Hil. And is every day spent thus?

Leo. No doubt.

Hil. Well, sister, I can tell you that Doctor

Sharp, my schoolmaster, has three daughters, about your age ; but they employ their time in quite a different manner.

Leo. How ?

Hil. First then, at six in summer, and at eight in winter, they are completely dressed for the day.

Leo. Then they do not sleep enough, and must be very heavy, long before night comes.

Hil. On the contrary, they are brisker far than you, because they go to bed at ten every night.

Leo. To bed at ten !

Hil. At ten ; that they may get up early in the morning. When you are fast asleep in bed, they have received their lessons in geography and ciphering. When the clock strikes ten, they take their needlework till noon ; and then assist their mother in the house.

Leo. Does their mother intend to make them housemaids ?

Hil. She may hope, by means of such an education, to procure them something better. But, however that may be, should they not be taught to govern servants, regulate a table, and conduct their own house ?

Leo. And are they busy after dinner ?

Hil. Why not busy ? They then have their piano, or writing ; and at night, assemble round a table, where they read by turns in the Spectator, or Sir Walter Scott's works, or other books ; while the two that are not occupied in reading aloud, employ themselves in mending their own clothes, or in

examining the linen of the house, and mending it, if needful.

Leo. So then they never take any recreation!

Hil. O, I beg your pardon! They amuse themselves as if they were three queens; for all these tasks are intermixed with little sports, and pleasant conversation. They pay visits also, and receive them; but take care to have their work-bags, and I never saw them idle for a minute.

Leo. This is certainly what Mr. Vincent meant. And yet my aunt has often told me that such an education as, according to your account, the Misses Sharp receive, is only fit for tradesmen's children.

Hil. But, supposing them tradesmen's children, would they find this education useless to them? They should certainly know household work, or how will they be able to instruct a servant? If they know nothing of it, every one will join to cheat them; and the richer they may be, the greater probability there is, that even the servants, whom they employ, will join each other to effect their ruin.

Leo. I protest you frighten me! I know nothing of the work about a house! scarcely how to hold a needle! Yet I have just been told that we have nothing in the world, except what Mr. Vincent's bounty gives us.

Hil. Ah, dear sister, so much the worse for us! should he leave us, or should we unfortunately lose him—But, possibly, my aunt is rich?

Leo. O no; she told me to the contrary half an hour ago. She has no more than is sufficient for

herself. In case then any accident should happen with respect to Mr. Vincent, what would be our fate?

Hil. I should be at first put to difficulties; but my master tells me that I should trust in God, and hope that he never would forsake me. His opinion is, that there are always generous people in the world, whose friendship may be gained by an exertion of one's skill to serve them in the way of some profession, and who frequently create employment for the industrious. Thus then, in the course of some few years, when I am more advanced in learning, I might undertake to teach such children as know less than I do. I should even improve myself by such an occupation, and with good behavior on my part, be sure of living with some sort of ease and comfort, and perhaps strike out a way to fortune.

Leo. But what benefit could I derive from all my skill in dancing, or in drawing, or in music? I should die perhaps of hunger, notwithstanding all these vain accomplishments.

Hil. And of course, Mr. Vincent cannot be well pleased when he discovers that you have been put to nothing but those arts which serve for ornament or pleasure.

Leo. And vexation sometimes, Hilary; for when I dance and sing in company, if I am not praised as much as I suppose myself to merit, you cannot think how much I am fretted by the disappointment! Shall I also tell you that I am often tired

of these matters, which my aunt says serve us to pass time away with satisfaction ?

Hil. And how do you entertain yourself ?

Leo. With the opera, dress, fashions, walks, and scandal ; we tell in one house what we have observed in another. But these helps to conversation, and the art of killing time, soon fail us.

Hil. I believe so. They are very poor subjects of entertainment, when we compare them with those that may be found in art and nature, which not only occupy our time agreeably, but teach us to reflect upon ourselves.

Leo. You have convinced me of it in yourself, who, notwithstanding you are two years younger than I am, are so much more improved. How many useful things has aunt neglected in my education !

Enter Mrs. Courtly, having overheard what Leonora said.

Mrs. C. And what useful things have I neglected in your education, Miss Thankless ?——[*Aside.*] But all this is owing to Hilary.

Hil. Well, good bye, sister, and good bye, dear aunt. I wonder Mr. Vincent stays so long up stairs. I will run and seek him if you please.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Mrs. Courtley and Leonora.

Mrs. C. The good-for-nothing blockhead ! Let his friend be once set off, and we shall see if he presumes to come into my presence again. But

what has he been saying, that has made you think your education thus neglected ?

Leo. Indeed, dear aunt, it is true ; for have you let me learn those useful matters which a young person ought to know ?

Mrs. C. Useful matters, my divine, my dear Leonora ! Is there any thing wanting in the least to your perfections ? Does not every one acknowledge that you are quite accomplished ?

Leo. Some things I do know, it is true ; but they are only such as serve to flatter vanity. Those arts that ornament the mind, as Geography, Arithmetic, History——

Mrs. C. All downright pedantry ! I should be vexed to death, if I had puzzled your poor brains with such old stuff, which is only fit for such a one as Hilary. Why, Leonora, did you ever hear, where I have carried you, that fashionable ladies mind such nonsense ?

Leo. No indeed ; but still, why not instruct me in those household arts, at least, which a person of my sex should know ? Can I even hold a needle ?

Mrs. C. No ; and why ? because I never meant you for a mantua-maker.

Leo. But suppose Mr. Vincent were to die, and suppose that I were to fall into distress ; what are my resources ? how should I subsist ?

Mrs. C. If that be all, I have a single word which will settle every thing ; as I can tell you now, that you will never want for money, but even swim in plenty. I have teased Mr. Vincent so

effectually, that he means to leave you all his fortune. But here he comes himself. I leave you with him, as he means to tell you his intentions.

[*Exit.*

Enter Mr. Vincent and Hilary.

Hil. [*running to his sister with a watch.*] Look, look, sister!

Leo. How! what is this? a watch?

Hil. Yes, sister! and a gold one! O my dear, dear Mr. Vincent! how rejoiced I am! Pray let me go and show it to the doctor. I will be there and back again immediately.

Mr. V. With all my heart. Inform him that it was not my design to please your vanity by such a present, but that you might know the different hours allotted to your different studies, and be always ready for your masters.

Hil. O, I shall always be ready for them now, that is certain.

Mr. V. Beg him likewise to allow you the remainder of the day from school; and tell him that I mean to call upon him in the afternoon.

Hil. Yes, yes, I will. [*He goes out.*

Mr. V. Well, Leonora, why so gloomy? What is the matter?

Leo. Nothing, sir.

Mr. V. You are not vexed that I have made your brother such a present?

Leo. Doubtless he will be very careful of it, and knows how to handle it!

Mr. V. I have shown him how, and there is no

difficulty in the matter. You are sensible that he wanted one ?

Leo. Quite so ; and I, for my part, could not find use for such a bauble.

Mr. V. I was thinking so ; you have a clock upon the staircase.

Leo. True ; and yet there is hardly a young lady I know, but has a watch.

Mr. V. That is lucky ; you may ask them the hour then at any time.

Leo. I may ; and, when they ask the same of me, make answer that I cannot tell them.

Mr. V. Leonora, Leonora, you are an envious little puss, I see ! but here is to prove that you have not been forgotten. [*Giving her a case.*

Leo. [*blushing.*] O, my dear good Mr. Vincent.

Mr. V. Well, I see you do not know how to open it.

[He opens it himself, and shows a pair of diamond ear-rings.

Are you content with these ?

Leo. O yes, if you are but content with me !

Mr. V. To say the truth, my dear, I am not quite so. We are now alone, and I must use a little freedom in conversing with you. Your dear aunt has spared no cost to let you have agreeable accomplishments ; and your appearance is a proof of her affection and good taste. I could only have wished that she had bestowed a useful education on you.

Leo. Hilary has been talking on this subject, and has convinced me that I want every thing which would be useful to me at a future time of

life ; but how may I acquire a knowledge of these useful matters ?

Mr. V. I am acquainted with a worthy gentlewoman, who instructs young ladies in such knowledge as is suited to their sex.

Leo. My aunt mentioned however that you would put me into such a state as would not need this knowledge.

Mr. V. I understand you ; and, to show my real disposition, leave you quite at liberty to choose that way of life, in which she meant to see you figure, since it suits your inclination. Yes, my dearest child, rely on my affection. After my decease I will give you every shilling that I possess.

Leo. What, all your fortune ?

Mr. V. Yes, Leonora, all ; but not without a fear that it will still be too little to prevent your being really unhappy.

Leo. Can it be possible ?

Mr. V. Are you qualified to do yourself the slightest service ? or make up, upon occasion, I do not say a costly garment, but the plainest dress that you ever wore ?

Leo. Alas, sir, I was never taught.

Mr. V. It is clear then you must always have a crowd about you to compose those articles which you have no hands to make yourself. You know, I suppose, how much fashionable women have occasion to lay out, that they may keep up their title with those who are as gay and foolish as themselves ! Now tell me, are you to suppose

that my property, when you are mistress of it, will suffice for this ?

Leo. I hope, sir, it will be enough, with the economy which I shall observe, to render me as happy as you may wish me to be.

Mr. V. Trust me, notwithstanding your economy, if you continue ignorant, it will not. And besides, when you come of age, what prudent man will take a woman who possesses no one talent conducive to his happiness ? It is plain, then, that nothing but the fortune you possess will render you an eligible wife ; and this circumstance shows still stronger the necessity of securing a fortune to you after my death.

Leo. O, sir ! but then my brother——

Mr. V. He must be content with what I do in his behalf while living, and the proofs of your affection when I am dead. I mean to have him taught whatever may be useful to him in the line of life he shall choose ; as, in that situation, with industry, it is not improbable he may make a fortune. I myself am an example of this probability ; he need but do as I have done. I leave you to reflect on my intentions, and shall communicate them to him as soon as he returns. [*He retires.*

Leo. [*alone.*] O what a pleasure ! heiress to all his fortune ! This is what my aunt desired so earnestly. I should be glad to hear what Hilary will say when Mr. Vincent tells him his intentions. He must be very jealous of me. However, I shall

not forget him. No, indeed; if I have any thing to spare. I must and will have something for him. But I hear Mr. Vincent coming back with Hilary. A lucky thought! I will steal into this closet, and listen to their conversation.

[She goes in, and shuts the door, unnoticed.

SCENE IV.

Mr. Vincent, Hilary.

Mr. V. So, Hilary, your master is pleased that I have made you such a present?

Hil. Yes, enchanted; but for my part, upon second thoughts, I am sorry for it.

Mr. V. Sorry, Hilary, and why?

Leo. Poor Leonora! she must doubtless be quite disappointed at having nothing, when I am master of a watch. I would not seem indifferent to your favors; notwithstanding, if I durst, I would desire you——

Mr. V. Generous little fellow! do not be uneasy; Leonora has received a pair of diamond ear-rings, worth ten watches such as yours.

Hil. O my dear Mr. Vincent, how I thank you!

Mr. V. And I shall not confine my friendship and affection to the gift of such a trifle.

Hil. O my generous friend and father!

Mr. V. I observe, with grief, that her education cannot but be the cause of sorrow to her hereafter.

Hil. So I likewise fear, sir; my dear aunt imagines that a little drawing, dancing, singing,

and the like, are all which she wants, in order to be happy in the world.

Mr. V. To these frivolous embellishments she sacrifices the much more important cultivation of her understanding; and forbears inspiring her with those good qualities which alone have a claim on human approbation. As your sister's mind has been neglected, she is pleased with applauses which are offered on the altar of her vanity. But when, in some few years, she sees how many useful matters of instruction, and how much inestimable time she has forever lost, she will inevitably blush at her own conduct, and even execrate her flatterers; who, on their side, will repay her hatred with ridicule and scorn.

Hil. O sir, you make me tremble for my poor dear sister!

Mr. V. And besides, what reasonable man will accept of a wife, whose want of knowledge is so glaring; who, instead of being able to establish order and economy within a house, must dissipate the greatest fortune, by her love of luxury; and whose incapacity will render her no less unworthy the esteem of him that is to be her husband, than of the veneration of his children? She must of necessity be as a stranger in the world, to every one about her. What would such a woman do without my friendship?

Hil. O, dear sir, let me beseech you not to remove your favor from her.

Mr. V. No; on the contrary, I am now upon the point of doing something for her.

Hil. Yes, dear sir; procure her a more useful education. Leonora does not want for understanding, nor good principles.

Mr. V. I would with all my heart; but, at her age, can any one expect that she will submit to any rigid treatment, after the indulgence which she has received at home? No, no; I see it will be better to determine upon something for her benefit, which shall take place when I am in my grave.

Hil. For heaven's sake, sir, do not speak so, I beseech you. No; I trust you are to live much longer for our common good; and Providence will not deprive us of our second father.

Mr. V. I am sensible of your affection; but the fear of death will not delay the fatal moment of its coming. Leonora's future lot gives me pain whenever I reflect on what it may be; and in short, I am resolved to give her my whole fortune, that at least she may have wherewithal to keep her from want.

Hil. [*taking Mr. Vincent's hand.*] O, thank you ten times over! How rejoiced I am, sir! Shall I leave you for a moment, to go and tell her this good news? But—no; it will be better to conceal it from her, at least till she has been induced to get some useful knowledge, from a notion that she must live, in future, by her industry. She will, by these means, know much better how to manage

what you give her. O my dearest Leonora! after all then, I may hope to see you happy!

Mr. V. Worthy little fellow! I am no less delighted with your generosity, than understanding. Come to my arms, my dear child! Could I wish to give your sister every thing, and leave you nothing? That were to the last degree unjust; therefore I revoke my first intention. It is you that *should* be my sole heir, and with propriety I ought to make my will accordingly.

Hil. No, no, dear sir, preserve your first intention and give Leonora all your fortune. I shall be much more diligent in my improvement, and anxious to acquire useful knowledge, which, I doubt not, with God's blessing, will suffice for my advancement.

Mr. V. Do not be uneasy with regard to Leonora. When I said that you should be my sole heir, it was not my idea that Leonora should be left without a trifling legacy, sufficient to obtain for her all necessary things.

Hil. Well then, let us exchange; the trifling legacy for me, by way of token from you, and the rest for Leonora.

SCENE THE LAST.

Leonora comes out of the closet, and runs to embrace her brother.

Leo. O my dearest brother! have I merited so much affection from you?

Hil. Yes, dear sister, if you will only do as I could wish, and be what our dear benefactor so much longs to see you.

Leo. If! Should it be a question? I *will* be so; I discern how much the difference of our education has exalted your ideas above mine, although I am much older. My good friend and father, let my future fortune be whatever you think proper; I can never be unhappy, if I leave you to determine for me. I desire instruction, and will take my brother for a model.

Mr. V. You will unavoidably be happy, if you keep this prudent resolution. But pray tell me, whence proceeds this change in your ideas?

Leo. I have just heard my brother's wishes for me; his disinterestedness, and generous sacrifice. I have heard too how *you* love me. I will reverence you for the future, and give up the little jealousies which I entertained against my brother. He shall be my guide and friend.

Hil. I will endeavor to be such, dear sister; it will be my boast and pleasure, if I prosper.

Mr. V. With what pleasing sentiments, dear children, do you inspire me! I am no longer sorry that Providence has left me childless. I consider you not less affectionately than I should do had I given you life; and think that I see your father, who looks down from heaven, well pleased in having left me such dear pledges of his love.

[Leonora and her brother take him by the hand, and bathe it with their tears.

Leo. Let us not lose a moment, sir. Where does that worthy gentlewoman live, you mentioned to me as a person who would teach me useful things?

Mr. V. I will introduce her to you shortly. I shall stay here some few days, and will endeavor to induce your aunt, if I can, not all at once, but by degrees, to second my designs. You must be careful not to anger or displease her. She deserves your gratitude. She has but erred respecting what was likely to insure your happiness; her wish was not the less to make you happy.

Leo. I believe so, but I renounce from henceforth all the nonsense which I have been studying. No more dancing, no more drawing, no more music for the future.

Mr. V. No, dear Leonora, that would be wrong again. On the contrary, you ought to cultivate them! for, in truth, they are desirable accomplishments. Only remember that they do not constitute all the merit which is required in a woman. They may render her more welcome in good company; be a relaxation to her after the cares attendant on a house and family, and make her still more fond of living in retirement; add another tie to the attachment of her husband; guide her in the choice of masters for her children, and enable her to forward their improvement. They are prejudicial only when they feed her vanity, and lead her into a fatal dissipation, or contempt of those duties which God's providence has called her to perform. They are flowers, which may possess some portion of one's garden, if the remainder be set apart for fruits and vegetables.

THE MOUNTAIN LUTE.

FROM the highest summit of those hills which overlook the vale of Lucca on the Savoy, I was contemplating the extended prospect around me. I was quite alone, having left my faithful servant in a neighboring city, with orders not to expect me till the end of three days; which interval I intended to spend in rambling over this romantic country. More than half way down the hill, I saw a hamlet, which assured me of a lodging for the night. Thus, free from inquietude, and wrapped in thought, I allowed my mind to range at large in contemplation, and my eye to wander from one object to another of the spacious view. But soon the sylvan choristers' last song admonished me to think of seeking shelter for the night. The sun, already sunk behind the opposite mountain, colored with his gold and purple rays the clouds, which floated, just above the trees that covered its summit. I descended slowly, mortified to see the spacious horizon, whose limits I could hardly trace, contract itself as I proceeded. The twilight now began to veil it with a shade, which by degrees grew browner, till the empress of night dispelled this gloomy darkness with her silver beams. I sat down for a moment, to enjoy the picture. Nothing intercepted

my view throughout the vast expanse, and I contemplated the infinite extent at leisure. From the trembling moon, and stars that twinkled while I gazed upon them, my eye passed over the calm and spotless azure of the firmament. The air was fresh, nor did the slightest breeze disturb it. Nature was lulled in universal silence, save the low murmur of a stream meandering through the country at a distance. Stretched upon the grass, I might perhaps have contemplated till the rising of the next morning sun; but the music of a lute, made more harmonious by a voice, soon after struck upon my ear. I thought at first my senses were deluded by the power of imagination, and I experienced the delight of fancying myself suddenly transported in a dream to what are called the regions of enchantment. In the midst of this illusion, while the music still continued, I arose on my feet. A lute upon the mountain! said I, and turned round to that side whence the melody proceeded, and discovered, through the darksome verdure of the trees, at no great distance, the white walls and garden paling of a cottage. I approached it with a beating heart; but what was my surprise, when I beheld a youthful peasant with a lute, on which he was playing with exquisite address. A woman, seated on his right, kept her eyes on him with deep affection. At their feet, on the turf, were many children, boys and girls, and old people, all ir attitudes of pleasure and attention.

When I first made my appearance, several of the

children came to meet me, looked at each other, and said among themselves, What gentleman is this? The young musician turned his head, but did not stop playing. But I could not withstand the first emotions of my heart. I held out my hand, he gave me his, which I siezed with a sort of transport. Every one now rose, and made a circle round us. I informed them, as concisely as I could, of my business in that quarter of the country, and at such a time of night. 'We have not an inn for many miles about,' remarked the youthful peasant; 'we live far from any road; but if you are content to put up with a cottage and poor people, we will do our best to entertain you.'

If I was at first astonished with his execution on the lute, and taste in singing, I was still much more surprised at the politeness of his manners, the precision of his language, and the ease with which he spoke. You were not born, I told him, in a cottage. 'Pardon me,' replied he, with a smile; 'I *was*, and even in this. But you are fatigued, I fancy. Didier, bring a chair. Excuse me, sir; I owe my neighbors the nocturnal entertainment I am now giving them.'

I would not take the chair, but laid myself upon the grass, as the rest did. Every one had now resumed his former posture; and the silence I had interrupted, by appearing among them, again took place.

The young man immediately began to play upon his mountain lute; and to sing a favorite ballad, which he did with so much sweetness, that I could see tears stand trembling in the eye of every lis-

tener by the time he had repeated the first couplet. I could not refrain from envying the rustic bard, whoever he might be, that could so powerfully impress an unlettered, and almost uncivilized society of people. I was charmed in seeing how surprisingly those beauties, which are drawn from nature, please the souls of all men. Of the poet's touches none were lost; and, at the last, which was the most affecting, I heard round about me nothing but half-suppressed sighs and stifled sobs.

After some few minutes' silence, the whole company rose up, wiping tears from their eyes. They wished each other a good night with perfect cor-

diality. The neighbors with their children went away, and none were left, except an ancient man upon a seat beside the door, whom till now I had not noticed; the musician, with the woman sitting by him; Didier, the young boy whose name I recollected; and myself.

It was painful to relinquish the state of ecstasy in which I was then plunged. I still continued sitting, but rose at last, and, drawing near the young musician, put out my arms, as it were by instinct, to embrace him. Sweet it is, said I, to meet with people who surprise us at first glance, and finish by attracting our esteem, before a quarter of an hour has passed. He answered me in no other way than by an ardent grasp of the hand. 'Dear sir,' said the old man, 'you are content, I fancy, with your evening's entertainment? I am glad you have conceived so suddenly a friendship for my dear Auvergne, for which you shall repose in my bed.' 'No, father,' interrupted Didier, who came running from the barn, 'I have been spreading me some straw; and it is my bed the gentleman shall lie in, if he please.'

I was forced to promise I would yield to this last offer. Didier, upon this, held out his hand; the old man rested on his shoulder and went in, when he had wished me a good night; and now I found myself alone with Auvergne and the young woman, who, he told me, was his wife. I asked them, if, for my sake, they would not pass fifteen minutes more in conversation with me, as it was moonlight, where we then were? 'Willingly,' said Genevieve, who

was not a little vain of the attention I had paid her husband. 'Yes, quite willingly,' replied Auvergne, who saw how much his wife desired it.

I sat down between them, with a linden tree behind me, through whose foliage the moon darted all her brightness.

My dear friends, said I, pray let me know how long you have enjoyed your present happiness?

'These six months,' answered she; 'and now it is upwards of a twelvemonth that Auvergne is happily returned from his travels.' You have travelled then? said I, with some surprise, excited by this intimation. 'Yes,' answered he; 'I have visited a part of Europe.'

Every thing I see about you, interrupted I, and every thing I hear you say, excites my wonder! If you have no secret motive in concealing the transactions of your life, do not refuse me, I beseech you, when I beg to know them. 'Certainly you will not,' answered Genevieve, with that simplicity which, conscious of no evil meaning, never hunts for phrases or set forms of speech. 'This gentleman appears so worthy of the favor he has asked! and besides, you know, I always hear the story with so much pleasure.'

He consented with a smile to our request; and it is *his* words I am going to set down, as far as my remembrance has preserved the narrative.

'As I have mentioned, sir, I was born in this cottage, being now three-and-twenty years of age. I had the grief to lose my mother, when I was an infant, hardly weaned. My father was in easy,

though not affluent circumstances; but a lawsuit into which he was forced, by one who is not now, but was then a wealthy farmer, entirely ruined him; and he died of grief, when he was torn from his paternal cottage, and beheld it sold for costs of law. The old man you just now saw, who has become my father, bought and came to settle in it. He was struck with pity on beholding me, an orphan at that early time of life, and told me, though so little, I should be his shepherd. I was treated very kindly by him; and his children looked upon me as their brother. Nevertheless, the loss of my poor father, the unkindness of my kindred who forsook me, with the thought that I was a mere stranger in the cottage where I first had my existence, and the lonely life I led upon the mountain, whither I was sent to watch my father's cattle, all afflicted me, and my accustomed gaiety was changed to melancholy. I consumed whole days in weeping, while my flocks were grazing round me on the plain.

'One evening I was sitting on the summit of the mountain, and amusing my afflicted thoughts by singing to myself the very ballad you have just now heard. Towards the conclusion, I observed a man among the trees. I noticed that he was dressed in brown; his countenance was very pale; he seemed melancholy; and he waited till my song was finished.

'He then came close to me, and inquired how far it might be to the public road? O, very far, dear sir, said I; above five miles. 'Can you conduct me thither?' I would do so gladly, could I

quit my flock. 'It is possible your parents may accommodate me with a lodging for the night?' Ah, sir, my parents are a great way off. 'Where can that be?' They lived like honest people upon earth, and they are now happy in heaven.

'The tone of my voice, as he afterwards informed me, affected this good man; and my reply, he said, could not but interest him. He put several questions to me, and my answers pleased him. As night was now come, I brought him to our cottage, where my master hospitably entertained him. On the morrow they had some discourse together with regard to me, and, when I was prepared to resume my daily charge, they told me Didier would in future take it, as the stranger meant to have me with him. It would be useless to tell you of my affliction at the thought of quitting this cottage, though no longer mine, and parting from my Genevieve, whom even then I loved, although she was quite a child. My situation was not any way a happy one; and yet I could not possibly foresee that my future destiny was to be decided by the present moment. Yes, to thee, beneficent protector of my youth, am I indebted for my present happiness! thou knowest, generous man, how ardently I prayed to God for thy prosperity while thou wert living, and with what exhaustless gratitude I still bless thy ashes! He was called La Rue, and had the place of organist in a small parish. You would judge imperfectly of his abilities, if you adverted to the nature and obscurity of his employment. Many travellers turned out of

their road to hear his music; but their praises only made him more modest. I doubt much if, in the course of your acquaintance, you ever met such a genius. He received from the affection of his father, who when living was a celebrated physician, such an education as would certainly have made him eminent in the same profession; but he chose rather to yield himself entirely to the ardent passion he had long before conceived for music. He had married the daughter of the organist whom he succeeded, but was childless. His dear wife, whom he had lost for several years, still lived within his heart. Her image, and his books, were now his sole society in that deep melancholy which had seized upon his mind; but still, whilst he avoided men, he did not hate them. On the other hand, he did much good in secret. He was forty years of age when I first came to him. He instructed me at first to read and write, and afterwards took pleasure in the cultivation of my voice, and teaching me to play on the lute, which was his favorite instrument.

'He did not stop at musical instruction, he provided me selections from the works of the great poets. He at once formed my heart, my understanding, and my taste. It was thus for five years he acted the part of an assiduous master, without any expectation of reward for all his pains and labor, but from Him, who best knows how to recompense the services we do our fellow creatures.

'In the midst of all these occupations, I never banished from my mind the recollection of my cot-

tage, nor the countenance of Genevieve, the partner of my childish pastimes. I was often speaking of them to my patron; and accordingly one day, I shall never forget it, it was the first of June, four years ago—he rose early, and, going as was his custom to take a morning's airing, bade me follow him. We talked of many matters while we went along, as chance presented subjects for conversation, till at last he brought me to the very mountain where I at first saw him.

'Dear Auvergne, (said he) I have fulfilled the duty I thought Providence imposed upon me, the first time I saw you. I am sensible how much you sigh, when you reflect upon the habitation whence I took you; and have had no other view in undertaking to protect and educate you, than at last to put you in a way of again possessing it. I now show it to you; look at it; but take notice, I forbid, on pain of my displeasure, your returning thither till such time as you have wherewithal to purchase it. I give you my own lute. I have instructed you to play upon it. Travel. You are not without a charming voice. Wherever people hear it, you will be the first of artists in your way, and need not be averse to assume the life of an itinerant musician. Such a novelty will not fail to procure for you both auditors and money; only be discreet and frugal; and, when rich enough, return to your own country, and buy your father's cottage.

'My heart beat high at this discourse, and enlar-

ged with hope and joy. He held me to his breast, shedding tears. They were the first I ever saw fall from him, and they made a singular impression on me. After this, we thought of returning back, and he conducted me in silence to his house.

'On the morrow, at break of day, I was to leave my benefactor. He bestowed, at parting, the instruction he knew I most needed, with two louis-d'ors. In four years' time, I footed it through Italy, France, and Germany, equipped like what I was, a peasant of the mountains, with my hair as you see it now, floating in large curls upon my shoulders. I took notice that the singularity of such a dress increased the effect proceeding from my music; and particularly in the capitals of every country through which I passed. Few noblemen, I fancy, ever travelled more delightfully than I did. Every where I found a good reception, not only from the middling sort of people but the most polite. The rich in cities made up concerts for no other purpose than to hear me; and in villages, I verily believe folks married for the mirth of dancing to the music of my instrument. In many places I had advantageous offers to take up my residence among them. They almost induced me sometimes, I acknowledge, for an instant; but, as soon as I again reflected on my cottage, every thought of fortune vanished, nor of all these projects left one remaining trace. I still remember what sweet sensations seized me, every time I travelled over a mountain, or even came in sight of one. In imagination I sought the hamlet on its brow,

and exulting/y thought for a moment I saw my cottage home. With my mind filled with such images, I endeavored to express my ideas, and these couplets were my composition.

'Sweet little cottage of my sire,
Where, when a child, I played!
In foreign realms, my whole desire
Pants to enjoy thy shade.
Each object lives within my mind
Which there the eye ran o'er,
The hamlet, and the hill behind,
The linden-tree before.
Astonished at men's pomp and pride,
Vast mansions oft I see;
But only can be satisfied,
Sweet rural cot! with thee.
Whence else would spring that blest content,
In name alone e'en sweet,
I should enjoy, had heaven e'er meant
To keep me that loved seat?
I should indeed live happy there,
Nor through the world thus roam;
And Genevieve the bliss would share
Of my paternal home.
Sweet breathe my lute then, since the strain,
Pleased daily, I renew;
For, if my double wish I gain,
To Music's power 'tis due.'

Auvergne went through these couplets with such sweetness and expression, that the fabulous story of Apollo wakened in me; and methought I heard that exiled deity on earth and in the vales of Thessaly, complaining he had lost Olympus. I desired to speak, but found my tongue without motion. Auvergne conceived the meaning of my silence, and went on:

'I am now about to tell you by what means I came again in possession of this precious cottage.

'Towards December last, when I had taken up my dwelling for a season at Turin, and had been twice from one end of Italy, in which Turin is situated, to the other, I examined the amount of my fortune, and conceived myself rich enough to pay a visit to my native mountain. I immediately sat out, and, after several forced journies, in ten days' time came as far as the city where my benefactor had resided. With what anxious expectation did I that moment enter it! and, as I went along, ask every one I met, what tidings he could give me of him? But alas! I was not to enjoy the pleasure of expressing what I owed to him; or behold him, happy in the consequences of his kindness to me. He had died two months before; I went to weep on his tomb, and made a vow to call my first child by his name, if I should ever be so happy as to prove a father.

'On the evening of that day I reached this hamlet. Every one, I found, spoke favorably of me, without at first knowing who I was. My lute, and the remembrance of our friendship, soon obtained me the affection of Genevieve. I received her from her father; and bought back, with his consent, the cottage, and the field belonging to it, for two hundred crowns, with which money his eldest son procured a farm in the village below us, and has been some time settled in it. As to our father, he wished to pass the remnant of his days with Didier in our cottage. It is from him I learn the art of hus-

bandry; for, now that I am once more in possession of my little patrimony, the summit of my ambition is, like my father, to be a good husband, a kind parent, and a virtuous farmer. I have not, as you may see, forgotten my lute, the precious instrument which made my fortune; but still keep it at my side, and often take it in hand for my own recreation, or to please my family and neighbors.'

Here Auvergne stopped; but still I thought I heard him speaking. My attention, captivated by his narrative, was turned insensibly upon his person, after he had finished. His ingenuous, animated countenance, the contrast of his dress and conversation, his attachment to a rustic habitation, and the gratitude with which he cherished the remembrance of his benefactor; his uncommon fortune, travels, and profession; every thing, I thought, exhibited the youth, in some sort, as a being of enchantment, and superior to the ordinary race of men. It was Genevieve first roused me from my contemplation, by leaning forward to embrace him. We rose up and went into the cottage, where, to my astonishment, I saw an air of order and propriety about me. After having made a plentiful, but light repast, upon such fruits as I was told the mountain yielded, Didier led me to a niche in one of the apartments; it was rather narrow, but the bed which filled it was both clean and wholesome. This bed, the little fellow told me, he released with pleasure in my favor. It was not long before I fell into a downy slumber and my sleeping thoughts were occupied upon the

same charming objects I had recently witnessed I did not, all the following day, quit his happy family, whether they were unemployed or occupied.

Auvergne related to me many entertaining matters which occurred in his travels, and explained how he acquired that ease of manners and politeness of expression, which at first had charmed me; and which, as I afterwards discovered, notwithstanding his extreme youth, conciliated the respect and love of every aged individual through the village.

The acuteness of his understanding, the unstudied openness of Genevieve, the old man's blunt good sense, the restless curiosity of Didier, made their conversation interesting, and diffused an indescribable variety that charmed me, and connected them much closer to each other. I was sure I could have passed my life away quite happy with them.

But why, said I to myself, why brood on such a contemplation? That very night I was to leave them. I confess I felt a pang of sadness in reflecting upon our separation; and imagined, by their looks, it would occasion them some sorrow likewise.

If my fortune in future should permit me with more liberty to dispose of the remainder of my life, I intend to make a yearly pilgrimage to this mountain, for the purpose of revisiting my friends, and exhilarating and filling my heart with those sensations of content, joy, and peace, which their society and habitation cannot but inspire.

THE CHRISTMAS BOX.

A DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MR. DAMER.	CHARLES, *Edward's Friend*
EDWARD, *his Son.*	ARCHIBALD, *an Orphan*
VERONICA, *his Daughter.*	CLEMENT, *a Servant.*

SCENE, *an apartment in Mr. Damer's house.*

ACT I. SCENE I.

Charles and Archibald.

Archibald.

SO early with us, master Charles?

Cha. Yes, Archibald; and what is more, I want to speak with you.

Arch. With me, sir? What can occasion the honor of your visit?

Cha. What but the pleasure, Archibald, of seeing you? The truth however is, that I am come to know what Christmas-boxes you have had.

Arch. What Christmas-boxes, do you ask me? If my mother, sister, and myself, have only the necessary things of life, we are content

Cha. But Mr. Damer surely lets you want for nothing.

Arch. It is true indeed we are his debtors for whatever we possess, and he continues to us the respect, as I may call it, which he has for my poor father; and his son too has a friendship for us. Do you see this new suit of clothes upon me? it is Edward's present. It was bought for him, but his father permitted him to give it me by way of Christmas-box. He has prevailed on Miss Veronica to present my sister with a few of her cast clothes; and we were last night very happy in receiving them.

Cha. I suppose so; but if you talk of Christmas-boxes, he has received some fine ones, no doubt.

Arch. Certainly, his father is so rich! and yet, I doubt if his pleasure be as great as ours. Fine things are no novelty to him. Even what we receive gives us less pleasure, than those persons feel whose benefactors unexpectedly make them presents.

Cha. I agree with you in this; but can you not tell me what Edward has received? no doubt he has shown you all his presents.

Arch. Yes, yes, he has indeed; but how shall I remember the whole catalogue? Let me reflect a little. In the first place, he has had some books, a case of mathematical instruments, a microscope, a pair of silk stockings, and a set of silver buttons for a suit of clothes.

Cha. But those are not the things which I mean. What I want to know about, friend Archibald, are the sweetmeats and nice things, which generally

are presented, at this season of the year, to children of our age.

Arch. O, his father has given him no such thing; he says, that sweetmeats do but spoil the teeth; and as for playthings, certainly Edward is too big for such matters. It is only from his aunt that he has received trifles of this sort. She indeed has given him some of what you mention.

Cha. Ay, ay! and what, for instance?

Arch. How can I remember them? There is in the first place, a great cake; a quantity of candied orange-peel; some capillaire; some sweetmeats; half-a-dozen companies of French and English soldiers, cast in lead, all in uniform; a chessboard; a box of fish and counters; and about a dozen china figures, made of Derbyshire spar. Why not go and speak to him yourself? He will show you every thing which he has received. Why put these several questions to me?

Cha. O, I know what I am doing. I had my reasons for interrogating you, before I went up stairs into Edward's room.

Arch. And pray what are those reasons? May I know?

Cha. I had determined never to reveal them; but, provided you will be secret——

Arch. I am no prater.

Cha. Then give me your promise.

Arch. There is my hand.

Cha. Well then, I will tell you as a secret I would

have you keep, that Edward is finely taken in

Arch. Edward finely taken in ! my friend ? cannot endure such language.

Cha. Then I will tell you nothing. I am still master of my secret ; you know that.

Arch. How, Charles ! And can you wrong my dear friend Edward at this rate ?

Cha. O, be assured, I shall not wrong him personally ; but I speak of an affair in which we both have come to an agreement.

Arch. But, if taken in, he is deceived.

Cha. No, no ; he has deceived himself entirely.

Arch. I do not understand a word of this enigma.

Cha. I will explain the matter to you. We had previously agreed to go equal shares in our Christmas-boxes, whatever they might be ; that is, in every thing which could be divided.

Arch. Well, and can he lose by such a bargain ? His father is not so rich as yours. Your Christmas-boxes therefore must, at least in point of value, equal his, and very probably exceed them.

Cha. It is true, indeed, I have received a very handsome Christmas-box ; this watch, for instance ; but a watch, you know, cannot be divided.

Arch. On your honor, have you had no other gift ?

Cha. Nothing, I assure you, but a cake and two small boxes of preserves. My father says, as Mr. Damer does, that sweetmeats hurt one. Whilst my mother was living, it was quite another thing, for then I had such delicacies in abundance ; and Edward knows as much, who saw my last year's

Christmas-boxes. It was this that induced him to make such a bargain with me ; and last week we confirmed it on our word. You see, then——

Arch. Yes, I see too clearly that Edward is to be your dupe. He will have only half a cake and some preserves for what he is to give to you. It is true, his aunt has sent him more than he can eat. But is it true, master Charles, that you have nothing else ? I must confess, I find it very difficult to credit your assertion.

Cha. Difficult to credit my assertion ? Shall I swear then to the truth of what I say ?

Arch. Swear ? Fie ! should a little gentleman, as you are, think of swearing in this matter ? It is entirely your affair ; and, if you are deceiving my good friend Edward, you will lose much more than he, Charles.

Cha. But, Archibald, do you know that I do not approve of such remonstrances ? It is Edward's business to reflect on the affair. Suppose Edward had received no Christmas-box ?

Arch. There was no fear of that. His friends are generous, and Edward's conduct pleases them. Your Christmas-box is such a trifle ! It would be quite unhandsome in you, to expect that Edward should have all the disadvantage on his side ; and therefore we must go and tell him.

Cha. O, that is done already. Late last night I sent him half the cake which I received, and part of my preserves. I have likewise written him a letter on the subject.

Arch. Then you will persist in your demands upon him?

Cha. And pray what would you do, in my situation? You that talk so much!

Arch. I would have nothing from him, having nothing to bestow; and free him of his promise.

Cha. O, your humble servant! Keep your counsel to yourself. Our bargain is a wager; and when people think of laying wagers, it is that they may win. Next year it shall be as he pleases; but, at present, if he do not give me half of every thing he has received, his cake, his orange-peel, his sweetmeats, soldiers, fish and counters, china-ware, and any thing else which you may have forgot to mention, I will follow him through all the streets, lanes, courts, and every thoroughfare in the city, and proclaim him for a cheat. Yes, tell him that from me, friend Archibald; and that such as we should keep our promise, after we have sworn to one another.

Arch. After you have sworn! Fie, fie upon your oaths! I am very poor; and yet, if you would give me all the Christmas-boxes which you ever received, not excepting even your fine watch, I would not swear in such a trifling matter. It must be a very solemn business that would make me take an oath.

Cha. Why, Archibald, you are a downright simpleton. Without this swearing, how would any one be bound to keep his promise?

Arch. Do you ask that seriously? His very promise should compel him to observe it, and the word of honest people be as sacred as an oath. If

you judge otherwise, I do not know what I am to think of you.

Cha. It is your idea then that Edward will be faithful to his promise ?

Arch. My idea ? Should he break it, insignificant as I must own myself, I would never look upon him as long as I have breath. But I am sure he will not break it ; and, to keep his word, will have no occasion for an oath.

Cha. That we shall see. Tell him, however, every thing I have said, that he may act accordingly.

Arch. I need tell him nothing. He wants no monitor to tell him his duty.

Cha. And pray add, I wish him joy that he is so finely taken in.

Arch. What ! you would insult, then, as well as—

Cha. No ; but I divert myself at his expense, as he would do at mine. Let him alone ! Another time, if he think proper, he may be revenged.

Arch. No, no ; this is the only business of the kind which he will ever transact with you.

Cha. As he pleases. I have enough by this day's lucky business to console myself. [*Exit.*

Arch. [*alone.*] I could not have imagined Charles so mercenary. If, in truth, he has no more from his father than what he mentions, why did he not break off the bargain, when he found it likely to press so hard upon his friend ? what avarice ! and what meanness likewise ! it is Edward's fault however, and will hardly ruin him. But here he comes.

Enter Edward, with a paper.

Edw. Ah, dear Archibald, I deserve, and richly, to be hooted for my folly! Read this letter.

Arch. I have learned what it contains. But pray how came you to make such a bargain? Certainly you should first have asked leave of your father and aunt, because what your parents and relations give you should not be disposed of without their consent.

Edw. That is true; but it is done.

Arch. And you must keep your word. But wherefore did you give it?

Edw. Because, last year and the preceding, Charles had better Christmas-boxes than I; and I supposed——

Arch. Aye, aye! I understand the matter. You designed to dupe him then; therefore you are with justice punished.

Edw. Would I had been contented with my own!

Arch. Well, no complaints, Edward. Is not your half sufficient for you?

Edw. So you fancy——

Arch. Do not go on. Edward means to ask me if he ought to keep his word?

Edw. But are you certain that every thing was fair and open on the part of Charles?

Arch. I think him honest, since he told me himself; and it is my practice to think well of every one till he has deceived me.

Edw. But how happens it that his father should have been so sparing towards him? Every former Christmas he has had a store of presents.

Arch. They were his mother's ; and, now she is dead, his father thinks as yours does, and, instead of childish toys, has bought him a fine watch.

Edw. Yes, yes ; I know it. He will conceal such of his presents as ought to be divided, and yet I must give up half mine.

Arch. Should he behave so, he would be a knave.

Edw. And should I, in that case, be bound to keep my contract with him ?

Arch. What is this question, my good friend Edward ? Just as if you were to ask me, Whether, if he prove a cheat, you might not be so likewise ?

Edw. But, unless I tell him, he will never know what I have had.

Arch. And can you hide this knowledge from yourself ?

Edw. But I have scarcely received more things that can be divided from my father, than he. The rest, you know, were from my aunt.

Arch. Did you except, in your bargain, what any one but your father gave you ?

Edw. O no, no !

Arch. Then your objection is answered.

Edw. [*vexed.*] What shall I do then ?

Arch. I have told you that already. In this affair you have but one course to take.

Edw. If I think fit to take it, to be sure I may ; but what can force me, if I do not ?

Arch. Your honor. Should you be so shameless as to break your word, then Charles will certainly expose your conduct, and with justice.

Edw. O, I don't care for that a rush. I will answer him at any time. But pray how will he be convinced that I have broken my word?

Arch. He knows, already, every thing you have received. I told him.

Ed. What, can you have betrayed me, Archibald? I will preserve no future friendship with you.

Arch. I should die with grief, if I had willingly betrayed you, dear Edward. I can very easily excuse my conduct, by declaring, that, before I knew of your agreement, Charles contrived to take me by surprise. But, if it were not so, and he had called upon me to speak truth, I must have done it. In order to be honest, we should no more lie than break our word.

Edw. You take his part against me! and shall I be still your friend? No, no!

Arch. As you please. I know what it must cost me if I lose your friendship, which is much more precious to me than all the gifts that your family have heaped upon me; but, at every risk, I have no other counsel for you; and, although you should not remain my friend, nothing shall keep me, while I live, from being yours.

Edw. A good friend truly, to look on, while I am robbed!

Arch. And pray who robs you but yourself? Why did you enter into an agreement, at the risk of losing?

Edw. But I might have gained.

Arch. And then would you have claimed your bargain from Charles?

Edw. Would I? What a question!

Ar. Why then not fulfil it on your part, and show that you can be just, when the conditions are so easy?

Edw. Are so easy? What! the loss of half my property?

Arch. Have you not the other half still left? Imagine yourself then to have received no more; but think particularly how much reputation such an action will procure you in men's eyes, when they observe that you put no value upon what the generality of children so fondly prize, but can scorn them when your word is to be kept. All who are told of your fidelity will love you. Granting that Charles designs to trick you, I am sure he will never have courage to look you in the face; whereas, on the contrary, you will walk before him with your head erect, sure of the esteem of all good people. Yes, my dear Edward, let us always deal uprightly, whatever price it costs. Ah, if I were rich, you should not have to mourn your loss a moment upon this occasion. I would give you every thing in my possession to make you amends.

Edw. [*embracing him.*] O, how much, my dearest Archibald, is your behavior to be praised! while I must hate myself for mine. Yes, I confess it, I was mercenary and unjust, but will be so no longer. I will look with scorn upon the baubles which had charms enough, as I imagined, to corrupt me; so let Charles immediately have his share, and you shall halve them; give him what you please. I

only desire that you will not scorn me for indulging such mean thoughts; I will henceforth be worthy of your esteem and friendship.

Arch. And you are so. You were never worthier of it than at present. I was well acquainted with your heart, and knew what measures you would take. This conquest of yourself will cause you much more satisfaction than the trifles that you give up; when some few days have passed, they would have lost their charms, and you would probably have given the whole away at once, to any child who should have wanted them.

Edw. Yes, yes; you know me very well. What therefore can I do, to show you my regard and gratitude for having saved my honor?

Arch. [*embracing him.*] Still love me, Edward.

Edw. Always, always; but it is proper that I should now bring my presents, and make haste to share them. I am quite uneasy till they are gone, and fear I shall repent of what I am about to do, if I do not soon despatch it.

Arch. You would soon repent of that repentance, should it happen; I am certain of it.

[Edward goes out.

Arch. [*alone.*] No; were all his presents mine, I should not be so pleased as I am now, in thus saving Edward's reputation. And, in fact, how happy must he be himself, in having kept his word at the expense of what he thought so precious! Doubtless this sacrifice cost him dear; well then, it will be on that account more glorious. I was certain of

his principles. He needed nothing but a little explanation of the matter, to behave with honor.

Re-enter Edward, with a large two-handled basket.

Edw. Come and help me, Archibald, that I may not let the basket fall; for every thing within it I esteem as sacred. I have left the cake in the closet, for fear of breaking it; but, when it is wanted, I will bring it. Here however is the candied orange-peel.

[He opens the parcel, and gives it to Archibald.

This, I take it, is about the centre. Take this side for Charles, and let me have the other in the box.

Arch. No, no; it will be far better to halve it in his presence; he may otherwise imagine that you have eaten some of it. Let us see the rest of the confectionery. First, four bags of sweetmeats. Two for each. Two bottles of capillaire. One Charles's, and the other yours. How many fish and counters are there here?

Edw. Two hundred fish, and twenty counters.

Arch. [*after having counted half of each.*] These are his—the box cannot be divided. You must therefore take it with the other fish and counters.

Edw. And these soldiers. How delighted we should both have been, in ranging them against each other, when the winter evenings come on.

Arch. We should indeed; but I am more delighted as it is. The English soldiers shall be yours. Their uniform is red and therefore much more lively than the white. A chess-board, and a microscope.

Edw. Ah! luckily they cannot be divided!

Arch. In reality they cannot; but together they

make two lots, and each of you take one; for Charles when he appears, may fall to quibbling with us; and I recommend you to keep clear no less of his suspicions, than of his open accusations. Give him the chess-board, and keep the microscope. You may employ it, to obtain the knowledge of a thousand beauteous objects which escape our eyesight.

Edw. Ah, here come what I shall be the most grieved to give! These sweet china figures.

Arch. You could not put all of them on your chimney-piece. Can you tell me what they represent?

Edw. The Muses and the Seasons.

Arch. Then give him the Seasons. You may justly take the best in your division, and the Muses cannot, with propriety, be parted. But, Edward, not to do things by halves, let me advise you to throw in your half of the fish and counters, with the box. His Seasons will then be as valuable as your Muses.

[He puts all the fish and counters into Charles's heap.

There they are.

Edw. You make me do whatever you think fit.

Arch. What I would do myself, if I were in your place. But what comes here? Ha! ha! a set of copperplates! I did not mention these to Charles.

Edw. [*overjoyed.*] You don't say so!

Arch. But what of that? It is just the same as if he knew it. Let me count the number; one, two, three.

[He counts two dozen, reading their inscriptions, and dividing them accordingly.

These, [*taking up one parcel*] it seems, are the reigning kings of Europe; and these other, [*count-*

ing] one, two, three, four, five, six, seven,—great men, who once flourished in England.

Edw. Well, which parcel shall we choose?

Arch. [*showing two plates selected from the second parcel.*] Here is our choice; this portrait is that Howard, of whom you have so often heard your father speak with rapture; and here is Gay, whose Fables always give you so much pleasure. Keep, by all means, such good companions.

[He puts all the kings into Charles's lot, and Howard, with the other six, into Edward's.

That is the whole.

Edw. [*with a sigh.*] Yes, yes.

Arch. But why that sigh?

Edw. Because you make me give up so many charming things.

Arch. Not I, my dear Edward; *you* make yourself do this. It was your resolution; and is so still, is it not?

Edw. Yes, yes. I have nothing else to beg, dear Archibald, but that Charles may have his share immediately. The sight of so much, which I must give away, grieves me.

Arch. Think no more about it. You have done your duty. I will go and speak to Charles, and bring him hither. If, as you imagine, he has cheated you, I wish—I cannot well tell you, how much harm I wish him. [*He goes out.*

Edw. [*alone.*] Yes, yes, much harm you wish him! In addition to my loss of all these charming things, the harm to me is, that he will laugh at my

simplicity in making such a bargain. When he sent me, last night, my miserable portion of his presents, doubtless he began at that moment to enjoy his triumph.

[He approaches the table, and surveys the things upon it with a look of sorrow.

I must part with so much! and part with it to one who meant to trick me! I cannot now help preferring whatever is not in my share. These bags of sweetmeats seem much bigger than my two. That chess and checker-board likewise, which I thought to play on, when my friends should come and see me, seems much prettier now than before. And those soldiers! they would have made me an army. All this, but just now, was mine; and I must give it up for nothing too! for nothing!

[He reflects within himself a little while.

Is my word then nothing? and my honor, is that nothing? If——but I hear a step. Yes, it is Charles—or, now I look again, not he, but Veronica.

Enter Veronica.

Ver. [*looking eagerly at every thing upon the table.*] What are you about, Edward? What is the meaning of all this? Do you intend one of these two shares for me? I can hardly think so; yet I should look upon it as quite loving in you——

Edw. Ah, my dearest sister, I would give you half my Christmas-box with pleasure; but it is not in my power; as half of what you see, is no longer mine to dispose of.

Ver. Is yours no longer? Why so, Edward? But O, now I understand you! This is some new trick

of Archibald. He is always wheedling you for something, which he tells you others want; and what he can pinch out of you in this way, he is sure to keep himself.

Edw. Do not speak, dear sister, in this manner of that worthy boy. I would give every thing in my possession to have his principles.

Ver. Well then, why are you no longer master of your own?

Edw. You will say, I am justly punished for my avarice; for I must yield to Charles one part of the presents made me by my aunt and father.

Ver. Instead of giving me that half! and why?

Edward. Because we bargained to divide our Christmas gifts. I have had a quantity this year, and he, unfortunately for me, nothing.

Ver. Then I would give him nothing; that is but just.

Edw. But we have pledged our honor. He has kept his word, and I must keep mine, or be looked upon as a cheat.

Ver. Ay, ay, you have got this notion from Archibald. I am mad to think that you let yourself be governed by a chit who lives by our assistance.

Edw. But pray, sister, though the notion should be Archibald's, is it not a just one?

Ver. Is it not a just one? No! I would warrant now that he has agreed with Charles to share all that he can persuade you to give up.

Edw. Do you seriously think so? No, no; you do him wrong; he is too generous for that.

Ver. It is you, Edward, that are too weak! or you might think that he would much more naturally take your part than another's, if he were no interested.

Edw. I profess myself his friend, and he is interested that I should not be a cheat.

Ver. Good! Ha, ha, ha! And so then, that you may not be a cheat, you will willingly be cheated by another?

Edw. Far better than cheat him myself.

Ver. And in a way so ridiculous! Ha, ha! how finely they are laughing at you!

Edw. What, Archibald laughing at me?

Ver. If he help to cheat you.

Edw. But I have pledged my word. The shares are made as you see, and Charles is coming.

Ver. Well, let him go away again. I should be glad to see you catch them, when they think you caught.

Edw. You would then have me disgrace myself that I may save these few baubles?

Ver. But suppose you could save them with honor?

Edw. Ay, but how, pray?

Ver. Why father, or rather aunt, for she may be more easy of persuasion, must be told the whole affair, and they will forbid your parting with their presents. I will take the business upon myself.

Edw. No, no, sister; if you love me—

Ver. You are determined to be pillaged. So be it then. I cannot object, since I shall not be a loser

by it. On the other hand, I shall enjoy the opportunity of laughing at your cost. And yet, upon second thought, I will run and tell father, if it be only to get you a good scolding, since you will not follow my advice.

Edw. But, sister—hear me !—Pray come back a little !—What ! you won't ?—You cannot imagine how much you will displease me !

[He follows, and endeavors to bring her back, but she refuses.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Edw. [*returning after a few minutes' absence.*] I could not possibly prevail upon her to return ; but she would go and tell father—In fact, she is in the right—If my father and aunt forbid me, I keep every thing, and do not break my word. I wonder that this idea did not sooner strike me. It is indeed unjust in some degree ; and there is a voice within me that condemns it. I should not have entered into this agreement, without thinking of each separate circumstance, and properly guarding against them. I wish Archibald were here, to fix me one way or the other. I am at a loss for his counsel. When he comes, I hope he will be alone. Ah ! here he is, and, as I wished, no one with him.

Enter Archibald.

Arch. Charles will very soon be here. He has gone to ask leave of his father to come. Be of courage, dear Edward ; nor let Charles suspect that these playthings are of any value to you. I begin to think he does not deal with you upon the square

in this transaction. I spoke to him rather seriously; and, by his answers, he appeared embarrassed.

Edw. O, I am sure he means to trick me; notwithstanding, I must be satisfied.

Arch. And have you not great cause for satisfaction? You have done your duty.

Edw. Well, I will try to conquer my reluctance in this point, and put on a good face before him; but could any one conceive what Veronica told me not ten minutes since? That I should beg father or aunt to lay their orders on me, forbidding me to give any thing away; and thus I should preserve my Christmas-box and reputation.

Arch. And your peace of mind;—would you preserve that likewise?

Edw. No, indeed. I even thought, while she was speaking, how disgraceful such an application would be to me.

Arc. Why then hesitate a moment longer? O my dear Edward! let us never stifle those first whisperings of integrity and generosity that may be heard within us. You will soon experience how much inward satisfaction flows from listening to them. Have we any real need of these poor gimcracks to make us happy? O, when you have parted with them, I will be more industrious to procure you other sources of amusement. If my friendship is of any value to you, be assured I shall esteem you ten times more, if you consult your honor in this matter.

Edw. Yes. I will do so, dear Archibald, and be proud of yielding to your counsel, as in every other

matter, so in this. I will follow it, however Veronica may persuade me to do otherwise. These *gim-cracks*—as you call them. Out upon such childishness! and, to prove how truly I despise them, I will add my two remaining sweetmeat bags to Charles's. There—they shall be mine no longer.

Arch. Bravely done, Edward! You are like a general who returns in triumph, after having won a battle.

Edw. Always have an eye upon me; and if you observe——

Arch. I know what you would say; but softly, here comes Charles.

Enter Charles.

Cha. [*somewhat embarrassed.*] Good morrow, dear Edward, I am told you want to speak with me. It grieves me, notwithstanding——

Edw. Pray what grieves you?

Cha. That my Christmas-box has been so trifling; and——

Edw. O, never mind it, if that be all.

Arch. Edward is but so much the more pleased, that he can compensate for what you want; and I could wish that you knew with how much pleasure he fulfils his promise now; but he can tell you what he thinks on this occasion.

Edw. Yes. What I now do, I do with all my heart.

[He takes Charles by the hand, and leads him to the table.

So look; here are all my presents; we first halved them pretty nearly; after which I added something

to your share, that you might have no reason to complain.

Ar. Two articles, the microscope and chessboard could not be divided. By the terms of your agreement, your friend might have kept them both; but he has honorably chosen to give up the chessboard; and accordingly I put it to your share.

Ed. I am sorry, Charles, that these china figures could not be divided equally. I have kept the Muses; but, because the Seasons were less valuable, I have added to them all the fish and counters in this bag, which were my own. You may still, however make choice of which lot you please.

Cha. No, no, my friend. I am quite content already.

Edw. But not I. There is, beside all this, a cake below, of which the half is mine. I make a present of the whole to you, and run to bring it.

Cha. [*calling him back.*] No, not now, Edward.

Arc. [*stopping Charles.*] Let him, let him, Charles. Yes, go, my friend. [*Edward goes out.*] Well, I am sure you will own, Edward thinks quite nobly, since you see his promise is so sacred with him. Any other in his situation might have been afflicted at the disadvantage of the bargain made between you ; but Edward goes beyond the agreement, and is happy in exceeding your expectations.

Cha. [*confused.*] True ; you make me blush, dear Archibald. And I cannot tell how it is——

Arch. You need not to blush, as if it were a fault of yours, that you received no greater presents from your father.

Cha. [*turning aside.*] Poor Edward !

Arch. Should you pity him, he would have reason to complain ; whereas at present he has none. It would have been the shame of tricking you, and nothing else, that must have rendered him unhappy. Look at what you have, and rejoice, as he does.

Edward comes in with the cake.

Edw. Here is what I give you. Half, as I have already said, is over and above the bargain.

Cha. No, Edward, it is too much.

[Putting back the cake with one hand, and concealing his face with the other.

Edw. Take it, take it, Charles; but don't imagine that I am doing thus through shame of having wished to retain any of my presents from you. I am sure Archibald will be a witness for that.

Arch. [*looking steadfastly at Charles.*] That I will; and in the face of the whole world.

[Charles wipes his eyes.

Edw. Surely, Charles, you are crying! What ails you?

Cha. Nothing, nothing—Only that you see me here, a pitiful, mean, sorry fellow, and one that has cheated you.

Edw. You cheated me? that cannot be! have we not been acquainted from our infancy? And are we not both children of good friends and neighbors?

Cha. Yes; and that very circumstance, Edward, aggravates my guilt. I do not deserve that you should think so generously of me.

[He takes Edward by the hand.

It is however in my power to prove that I am not totally unworthy of your friendship. In reality, this Christmas I have received no playthings, or the like, from my father, but—[*feeling his pockets*] —here are three new guineas, which I requested him to give me in their stead. You see then I was a deceiver, while you acted with such generosity; but I repent, and give up the half. In fact it is your own, and, if you have any pity, pardon me my knavery, and be still my friend.

Edw. [*embracing him.*] Yes, always while I live.

How you rejoice me! Not however with your money, as I shall not take it.

Enter Veronica.

Ver. Archibald must come immediately to father.

Cha. O my dear young lady, cannot he stay a little? I shall lose the pleasure——

Ver. Yes, of squeezing something from my brother! but you have heard the message; so come with me. What! you would have father wait for you!

[She takes his hand and pulls him along.

Edw. Sister! sister! only a few minutes.

Ver. [*mocking him.*] Brother! brother! No; I will have him with me.

[She goes out with Archibald.

Edw. [*taking Charles by the hand.*] O, my dear friend Charles, how I rejoice while I am speaking! I could have no right to hope for such sincerity of conduct from you.

Cha. How! when you bestow upon me half your things, without expecting any in return from me.

Edw. No, no; you must not thus applaud my generosity. You cannot imagine how reluctantly at first I parted with this half; and, had it not been for the exhortation which Archibald gave me, I should not have kept my word after all.

Cha. And to him am I indebted likewise for the satisfaction of not having quite completed my unworthy tricking scheme. He set the baseness of it in such full light before me! And when I afterward entered here, and found with how much generosity you had proceeded in your distribution——

Edw. In my distribution! It is Archibald who has all the merit of it. I cannot tell what happy art he has; but it became a pleasure to me to deprive myself of what I had previously cherished. Yes, there is something in your share, which I added myself.

Cha. But you shall keep the whole; for I will have nothing of it, and am happy to get rid of such a burden. I should never have presumed to look you in the face. I could not have thought how much one suffers by becoming dishonest.

Edw. And how was I tormented, also! But now I experience how much pleasure flows from generosity. All this is due to Archibald. So necessitous, and yet so upright! Surely he did not claim any recompense for telling you my Christmas-boxes?

Cha. He, my dear Edward! What can cause such a thought?

Edw. My sister, in her jealousy, would fain have had me think so.

Cha. O, if you had heard how handsomely he spoke about you, and espoused your interest in our conversation! I had need of all my art and cunning to get information from him what you had received. And therefore henceforth he shall have, what he has merited so well, my friendship; and I will give him the remaining half of my three guineas.

Edw. No, no, Charles; leave me to recompense him as I well know how; and keep your money, with the half that is yours, of my Christmas-boxes.

Cha. What! I keep it? Never. Look you;

rather let us give him every thing which we should have shared between us. We have well deserved to lose, and he to win.

Edw. Yes, with all my heart. And do you know what you must do? It is in our power to please him very much. I will order all these things upon the table to be carried to his mother; so that he may see them there, the first time he goes home.

Cha. Good! good! provided, by the by, he do not return too soon, and interrupt us.

Edw. I will go for the servant. In the mean time pack them up as quick as you can in the basket. I shall be back again immediately. [*Exit.*

Cha. [*alone, filling the basket.*] O, the good, good Archibald! I cannot help thinking how happy we shall make him! and what is more too, I shall have my part in the pleasure. I would not give it up for all these pretty things. Who could have persuaded me yesterday, that I should enjoy more satisfaction in bestowing on another what had been so much the object of my wishes, than in keeping it myself? I wish I were my father, to recompense him as he merits. Thanks to his persuasion, I am now convinced, that to be just gives much more happiness than to possess great riches.

Enter Edward and Clement.

Edw. [*bolting the door.*] Come in, Clement. What we want, Clement, is, to take this basket on

your shoulder, and convey it to the house of Archibald's mother. It is for Archibald.

Clem. O, with all my heart, sir; we are every one of us fond of that young man!

Edw. to Cha. I hope you have almost finished.

Cha. In a moment. Every thing is in, except the china figures, which I will put at top, that they may not be broken.

Edw. A good thought; but make haste, for fear of his return.

Cha. There, that is the last.

Edw. Now, Clement, you have nothing to do but to carry it this moment. Do not loiter by the way, and take especial care of breaking any thing.

Cha. Stay; here is the guinea and a half which I said I would give him. I will just wrap them up, and put them with the fish and counters.

Arch. [*at the door without.*] Open, open; it is Archibald.

Edw. Bless us! what are we to do? [*going to the door.*] A moment, friend, and we will admit you.

Cha. Hark ye, Clement, here is the money; slip it somehow or other, as you go, into the basket.

Edw. [*to Clement.*] He will suspect us; so, take up the basket, and withdraw into a corner of the room till he has passed you.

Cha. Yes, close up against the wall; and afterwards slip out without his seeing you.

Clem. I understand.

Arch. [*as before.*] Well, Edward, am I to be let in? your father is coming.

Edw. [*to Charles.*] May I open now ?

Cha. Yes, yes ; all is done.

[The servant goes behind the door, which Edward opens, and lets in Archibald.

Edw. I ask your pardon, my good friend, for keeping you so long without ; but we were busy.

[He takes Archibald by the hand, and places him in such a manner, that he cannot see the servant without turning round.]

Arch. Busy, pray ? And at what ?

[He turns, and sees Charles making signs to the servant. Why all these signs ?

[Perceiving the servant with the basket. Aha ! what has Clement got there in the basket ?

[Goes to Clement, and attempts to look into the basket.

Cle.[*preventing him.*] Softly, softly. It is a secret.

Arch. How ! a secret ?

Cle. You will know what it is when you get home.

Arch. [*keeping him from going out.*] No ; I will know this moment ! Is it possible that I can have guessed ! and would my dear friends then affront me so ?

Edw. Affront you ? It is a poor acknowledgement with which we pay those services which you have lately done us. [*He offers him the basket.*] Yes, dear Archibald, all these things are yours.

Cha. And this gold also.

[Presenting him the money, which the servant had returned to him. Archibald puts his hand aside. Charles throws the money, thus refused, into the basket, which Edward still offers to Archibald.]

Arch. What are you about ? no, never, never.

Edw. I *will* have it so.

Cha. And I entreat it as a favor of you. Be my friend, as you have shown yourself Edward's.

Clem. If *I* durst add my prayer to that of these two gentlemen, you will occasion them more pain than they deserve to suffer, by refusing their request. I wish I had it in my power to offer you my present, as they have. It would indeed be little, but come wholly from my heart; for all the family, and every one that knows us, loves you.

Arch. O my dearest Edward! my kind Charles! [*he embraces them,*] and you, my good Clement! you draw tears of joy and admiration from me; but the generous feelings in your bosoms carry you too far. I have not merited what you are doing for me, and shall therefore never take it.

Edw. You would wish to mortify me then? And cruelly refuse my friendship?

SCENE THE LAST.

Archibald, Charles, Edward, Clement, Mr. Damer.

[Mr. Damer, having entered unnoticed, some time before, stands still to listen to the conversation; and now advances, as if he had overheard nothing.]

Mr. D. Well! shall I always find you thus sparring at one another?

Edw. O father, let your authority determine our dispute; for Archibald treats us very harshly. He has made me faithful to my promise——

Cha. He has brought me to preserve my honor.

Edw. And now scorns us when we would be grateful.

Arch. [*throwing himself into Mr. Damer's arms*] O, my worthy patron! and my second father! save me, save me from their generosity. I was so happy, just this moment, as to vindicate my conduct from the accusation thrown upon it, and shall I now belie my motives? No; I should, in that case, be justly suspected of a mercenary disposition. Let them not corrupt me, I beseech you.

Mr. D. How you charm me, my dear children. No, good Archibald, these their presents are as nothing when compared with so much delicacy and disinterestedness. I will put an end to such an honorable contest. [*To Charles and Edward.*] Keep each of you your own. I will take it on me to evince your gratitude.

Edw. O, father! of how much pleasure you deprive us!

Cha. And how much you punish me! as, very likely, my behavior merits. But you are witness, on the other hand, to my repentance. Condescend, then to prevail on Archibald——

Arch. [*to Mr. Damer.*] No; for heaven's sake, sir, do not listen to him.

Mr. D. I *do* listen to him; and *will* have you be compliant upon this occasion. It would look too much like pride, should you refuse him; it would, besides, be cruel to deprive him of the pleasure arising from a generous action. Take this money then, and send it to your mother, who first taught you such a noble way of thinking.

Arch. You compel me to accept it, sir, and there-

fore I obey. O how rejoiced will she be to have it! but at least, sir, let Edward keep his presents.

Mr. D. Well then, let him ; but to share them with his friend. I will buy the whole of them again with these three guineas.

Arch. Ah my kind, good benefactor ! put some limits to your generosity. I know not well what I am doing, so much beyond all measure is my joy. My poor dear mother ! it is a long while since she was so rich as I shall now make her ! O, my good,good friends !

[He embraces Charles, and afterward Edward, without the power of speaking.

Mr. D. Edward, I owe you likewise a reward, for complying with Archibald's noble counsels.

Edw. How can you reward me so much to my satisfaction, father, as by what you have so lately done for him.

Mr. D. That is merely nothing. Hitherto he has been only the companion of your pleasures, but shall henceforth be the partner of your studies : I will make no difference between you in respect to education.

THE GREYHOUND AND THE RING.

A DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MR. CALVERT.
SERINA, *his Daughter.*
EUSTACE, *his Son.*

LIONEL, RUFUS, *Eustace's Friends.*

SCENE, *an apartment in Mr. Calvert's house.*

ACT I. SCENE I.

Serina, alone.

AH, my poor little Diana! I shall never be able to sit at work without you. It was here, on this little cushion, that you lay down beside me, while I was at my needle. How joyful and pleased were we both when you awoke! You would run, shaking your tail, under the sofa, and under the chairs and tables, and then jump from one to the other. How happy did you appear when I patted your head! How you would lick my hands and face, and play with me! O, how sorry I shall be if I never see you again! I should never have lost you myself; but that careless Eustace——

Enter Eustace.

Eus. [*overhearing the last words.*] I heard my name called in question.

Ser. Ay, whose else should it be? If you had not been so positive in taking her out with you yesterday, she would not have been lost.

Eus. That is true, and I am as sorry on it as you are; but what can I do now?

Ser. Did I not beg to have her left at home? but you could not go a step without her at your heels.

Eus. I own it. I was pleased, when she was along with me, to see her run sometimes before me, and sometimes behind me. Then she would race from me as if I were pursuing her, and come back again at full speed, and jump up about me so playfully!

Ser. You should have taken better care of her.

Eus. Yes, I should so. But, as she used to go away from me, and come back of herself, without any occasion for my calling her, I thought——

Ser. You thought? you never mistrust any thing; and by that means Diana was lost.

Eus. I promise you, sister, the next time——

Ser. Yes, another time when we have nothing to lose. I could not sleep a half an hour together all last night. I thought I heard her whining to me at a distance, and that I ran to the place whence her cries came. Then I awoke and found myself alone. Poor thing! I dare say she is as dull too, for her part.

Eus. Dear sister, it makes me doubly unhappy to see you grieve thus. I would give all I am worth to have her again.

Ser. Now you grieve me still more. Why, don't you at least know where you missed her? You might inquire among the neighbors thereabouts.

Eus. I am positive she followed us into this street, and almost as far as our own house too. But, as she runs into every court smelling about, somebody must have shut a door upon her, and kept her in.

Ser. Yes, I dare say it was so; otherwise she would have come back to her lodging. She knows the way to it well enough.

Eu. Lionel was with me, and declares that he saw her the moment before we missed her. And it was his fault; for he was playing such comical tricks as we walked along, that I forgot Diana just then.

Ser. Well, he should have helped to look for her.

Eus. So he did all yesterday evening, and to-day again very early. We went into all the streets and lanes round about, and searched every court and market near us. We inquired, in short, among all our acquaintances, but could hear nothing of her. Indeed, sister, I am ashamed to look you in the face. I know you must be angry with me.

Ser. [*taking him by the hand.*] No, I am not angry now. You did not mean to disoblige; and besides, you are very sorry yourself! But who is coming up stairs? Go and see.

Lio. [*opening the door.*] It is I, it is I, Eustace. Good morning to you, miss Serina.

Ser. Good morning, master Lionel.

Lio. I have a clue of Diana, and hope pretty soon—

Ser. What! to find her again?

Lio. I'll tell you. You know that old woman who keeps at the corner of the street, and sells cakes?

Ser. What ? has she my little dog ?

Lio. No, no ; she is a very honest woman and a friend of mine. You know, Eustace, that Diana wanted t'other day to scrape acquaintance with her, standing up, with her paws upon the counter, and smelling at the cakes.

Eus. O yes ! But her fond tricks would not do there, for the old lady gave her a great blow on her nose with her glove.

Ser. O, that's nothing. Well, master Lionel ?

Lio. Well, just now I went to her shop to buy some cakes, and was telling her of our loss. What, says she, that little cur dog ?——

Ser. Cur dog, master Lionel ? Don't call my pretty little Diana thus. I would rather not hear you talk of her at all.

Lio. Nay, I only tell the woman's words. That little cur dog, said she, which belongs to that pretty young gentleman, your acquaintance ? Yes, said I, the same. Well, you know another little master, who lives here below, at the large house with the balcony ? It was he who coaxed her away.

Eus. How ? could she mean Rufus ?

Lio. Don't you remember that he was at the old woman's shop yesterday as we passed, and pretended not to see us, for fear of being obliged to offer us some of his walnuts ?

Eus. That is very true. I recollect it now.

Lio. Well, when we had passed her shop a little way, he called Diana as she was following us, and offered her a bit of cake ; and, while the poor thing

was feasting, he took her in his arms and carried her home. The good woman told me the whole trick.

Se. An ill-natured creature! well, we know where she is. Brother, you had better go to him directly.

Lio. I am afraid he would not find her there. Rufus has taken her only to sell her, as he does his books, and whatever else he can purloin at his father's. He is capable of any mischief. Why, we were playing at marbles t'other day, and he cheated.

Eus. Is that his way? I'll run to him this moment.

Lio. You will not find him at home. I have just been there, and he was out.

Ser. Perhaps he bid them say he was not at home.

Lio. No; I went up to his room, and I told the maid that I wanted him to come and play at marbles, and that I would wait for him at your house.

Ser. He will never have the face to show himself here, if he has really taken Diana.

Lio. O, you do not know his assurance. He would come here on purpose that you might not suspect him; but I'll convict him before you.

Ser. We must go cunningly to work, and question him slily, to make him discover the secret.

Lio. I'll tell you. All the cunning required is to tell him at once that he is a rogue and a thief.

Eus. No, no, my dear Lionel, that would only bring on a quarrel, and my father would not have any here. Mild words will touch him better than reproaches or violence.

Ser. Perhaps too he does not know that the little greyhound is ours.

Li. No! know! he sees her with your brother every day; he has played with her a hundred times, and has stolen her to sell her. That is just his character

Eus. Hist! here he comes.

Enter Rufus.

Ruf. I was told, Lionel, you wanted me to play at marbles. Come, I am ready. Ah, Eustace, how do you do? Your humble servant, miss Serina.

Ser. You are going to your diversion, master Rufus. Nothing gives you uneasiness; but we are all in trouble here.

Ruf. What is the matter?

Ser. We have lost our pretty little greyhound.

Ruf. Dear! that is a pity; she was a pretty little creature indeed! Her body so handsome! a grey with black spots here and there, and her tail and forefeet and breast all white. She's worth two guineas, if she's worth a farthing.

Ser. You know her so well! could not you help us to find her again?

Ruf. Do you take me for a dog-keeper? or am I obliged to look after yours?

Eus. My sister meant not to affront you, Rufus.

Ser. O dear, no! It was only a civil question. As you live in our neighborhood, and she was lost not far off, I thought that you might be able to get some accounts of her.

Lio. And you could not apply to a better person.

Ruf. What do you mean by that, master Lionel?

Lio. That is best known to yourself; although I am perfectly acquainted with the whole affair.

Ruf. If it were not out of respect to Serina—

Lio. You should thank her, that I do not chastise you for impudence.

Eus. (*taking Lio. aside.*) Softly, my dear Lionel, or we shall lose the greyhound.

Ser. If, as you say, you have a regard for me, master Rufus, be so good as to hear me attentively, and answer me, yes or no.

Lio. And without shuffling.

Ser. Have you not our greyhound? or do you not know where she is?

Ruf. (*confused.*) I? I your greyhound?

Lio. Do you stammer at the question? you have her; and I know the whole story too. You took her treacherously, coaxing her with a bit of cake.

Ruf. Who told you so?

Lio. One who saw you do it.

Ser. I ask it as a favor of you, master Rufus, to tell me, is this true or false?

Ru. And suppose I did give your dog a bit of cake, or took her up to play with her for a moment, is that a reason that I should have her, or know what has become of her?

Ser. We do not say it is. We only ask you, if you know where she is just now?

Eus. Or if you did not keep her at your house last night out of a frolic, to frighten us a little, and afterwards to give us the pleasure of a surprise?

Ru. What, do you take our house for a dog-kennel?

Lio. He must have a vast deal of assurance!

Ruf I have nothing to say to *you.* You may

be counsellor for greyhounds as long as you will, won't be examined by you.

Lio. Because I have confounded you.

Ser. Softly, master Lionel, you must be mistaken. I cannot suspect master Rufus of so much meanness as to keep our dog if he had found it.

Eus. If he had lost any thing, and I could give him an account of it, I would do it with pleasure. So he need not be angry at our questions.

Ruf. I am very angry at them, and will make a complaint of it to your father.

Lio. You had better go to the cake-woman's house. I will go with you.

Ruf. It is very pretty of you, to believe such a prating gossip before me.

Lio. Such gossips, however, have eyes and ears; and, as far as honesty is concerned, I should trust them sooner than you.

Ruf. I will not put up with this affront, and you shall pay for it. [*Exit.*

Lio. What an impudent liar! I would wage my life he has the dog. Did you not see how he was confounded when I told him flatly that he had her?

Ser. I cannot believe it yet, and indeed it would be quite too scandalous.

Lio. You cannot believe it, miss, because your own heart is so good; for my part, I can believe any thing of him.

Ser. I must own, however, that it was very rude in him not to answer our questions civilly.

Lio. If you had not been here, miss, I would have tweaked him by the ears a little.

Eus. Pho, Lionel, he is taller than you by a head.

Lio. If he were twice as tall, he is a coward. Did you not observe that he grew more impudent as we were more civil ? and the harder I pushed him, the quieter he became ? But I'll follow him, and take Diana from him, wherever he has put her.

Ser. Your pains will be to no purpose, master Lionel. Once more, I cannot believe it. He lives too near us, to expect to hide such a theft.

Eus. I hope he may not kill her, for fear of being found out in a lie.

Lio. No, my friend, he won't kill her. He keeps her for sale.

Se. O heavens! what an opinion you have of him!

Lio. It is such as he deserves, and I'll go and convince you of it. [*Exit.*

Eus. Lionel is too hot. He makes a terrible quarrel out of the smallest difference. If they must wrangle, I am at least glad that it is not here.

Ser. For then, father would give us a fine lesson. Lionel wishes to serve us ; but I am sorry he seems to seek his own revenge more than our advantage.

Eus. He desires nothing better than to be in every quarrel, and he has done us more harm than good. If Rufus really stole Diana, he would return her to me sooner for good words than for threats. But here comes father.

Enter Mr. Calvert.

Mr. C. What have you done to Rufus? He came to

me, and seemed quite ruffled. He complains of you very much, but particularly of Lionel, and says you accuse him of stealing Diana. Is she lost?

Eus. O yes, father. I did not like to tell you, because I hoped every moment to find her again. She went astray from me yesterday evening.

Ser. You cannot imagine how sorry I am for her. I cried the best part of last night, when I awoke and missed her from my side.

Mr. C. Luckily, it is but a dog. Losses of much more consequence happen every day in the world, and we should early accustom ourselves to bear them. [*To Eus.*] But why did you not take care of her?

Eus You are right, father. It was my fault. I should have kept her at home, or not lost sight of her when I took her in charge. I am sorry, especially on account of my sister, because Diana was hers more than mine.

Ser. I cannot be angry with my brother for it. I have often vexed him without intention, and he has excused me.

Mr. C. Kiss me, my dear child; I love to hear you bear misfortune with courage; but am still better pleased to see you, in the midst of your grief, not the least provoked against him that caused it.

Ser. My poor brother is sufficiently punished for his negligence, for he was as fond of Diana as I. She was all his amusement, and he grieves besides that he is the occasion of my uneasiness.

Mr. C. Always cherish these sentiments toward each other, my dear children, and indeed toward

all your fellow-creatures, for we are all of the same family. I know many persons who, for such a trifle, would have discharged an honest servant.

Ser. Heaven forbid! Prefer a dog to a servant? A creature without reason to one of our own kind?

Mr. C. Why do not all persons make that distinction as well as you, my dear child? We should not then know many, who would rather see a poor child suffer hunger than a favorite dog; who shed tears at the indisposition of a spaniel, and look without pity on an unhappy orphan abandoned by all the world.

Ser. O father, is it possible!

Mr. C. In return for the sentiment which draws that generous sigh from your breast, I promise you a greyhound as handsome as the one you have lost, if you are not lucky enough to find her again.

Ser. No, father, I thank you. I have suffered too much from the loss of Diana. If she does not return, I will never have another. I will not run the risk of being so grieved again.

Mr. C. You carry things too far, my dear Serina. In that case we must resign all the most agreeable pleasures of life. We should be afraid to love a friend, because death or absence might one day separate us from him. If you compare the pleasure which Diana's playful fondness has afforded you ever since she was born, to the short uneasiness that her loss occasions you now, you will find that the first greatly exceeds the second.

Nothing is more natural than to be fond of a pretty little creature like Diana ; and indeed it would be a mark of ingratitude in you—

Ser. If I did not think of her now, because she is not here to play about me.

Mr. C. What comforts me a little in this respect is, that from this loss you will be better enabled perhaps to bear a greater. Every thing that we possess upon earth may slip from our hold with the same readiness, and it is wise to accustom ourselves early to the most severe losses. But, to return to our first subject of conversation ; you have treated Rufus ill, it seems.

Ser. Not we, father; we spoke to him very mildly. It was Lionel who touched him a little closely.

Mr. C. And what did he say in answer ?

Eus. He defended himself but lamely. Indeed he was quite out of countenance at the first question.

Ser. But now I will ask you, father, do you think that he could have the assurance to deny it, if he had really taken my greyhound ?

Mr. C. I can say nothing as to that; but I should think, his confusion could not come from a clear conscience. However, that we may have nothing with which to reproach ourselves concerning Diana, we must advertise her to-morrow in the public papers.

Eus. But, father, if she be really in his power, that trouble will be useless.

Mr. C. No, it cannot be useless. A dog requires to be fed, and is not so small nor so quiet as to be hid from every body's eyes. There may happen

to be some person in his house honest enough to give us information of it. I will not apply to his father; I know his rude manners too well; and I know he is offended with me for forbidding your too close an intimacy with his son. We must wait to see what our advertisement will produce.

Ser. I should have some hopes from it if I were able to promise a large reward to whoever would bring me back the dog.

Mr. C. I shall take care of that. Come, Eustace, to my closet; we will put down her description, and you shall take it to the printing-office.

Ser. O, what joy it would be for the poor little creature and me to see each other once more!

ACT II. SCENE I.

Eustace and Serina. [*Eustace running into the room overjoyed.*]

Eus. Sister! sister!

Ser. What is the matter? You seem to be in high spirits. Is Diana found?

Eus. Diana? O, something much better. See. [Showing a ring in a small case. Look at what I have found not a yard from our door.

Ser. O, the charming ring! But the stone, which should be in the middle, where is that?

Eu. I suppose it had fallen out. See here it is in a paper. Look at this diamond in the light. See how it sparkles! My father's brilliant is not so large.

Ser. I pity him very much who has lost it.

Eus. It is worse than to lose a greyhound.

Ser. O, I don't know that. My little Diana was so pretty, and so fond of us. And then we had her when a puppy. O, when I think how happy we were to see her learn new tricks as she grew bigger and to amuse us with her play, the finest ring that ever I could wear could not make me half so happy.

Eus. But with this ring you might buy a hundred greyhounds like her.

Ser. It should not buy mine for all that. The person who lost the ring perhaps has other rings, but I had only one Diana. I am worse off than he is.

Eus. It must belong to a rich man. Poor people have not such costly toys.

Ser. Yet it was some poor servant lost it, in taking it to the jeweller—or perhaps the jeweller himself; the diamond being loose would make one think so · what a misfortune it would be for the poor people !

Eus. You are right. Well, now I am quite out of humor with my prize. We must ask father's advice about it. This is lucky ! Here he comes.

Enter Mr. Calvert.

Mr. C. Well, will the advertisement for your greyhound be in to-morrow's paper ?

Eus. Father, I have not been to the office. Here is what kept me. A ring that I have found.

[Gives him the case.

Mr. C. A very fine diamond, indeed.

Eus. Is it not ? This is enough to put a little dog out of one's head for a moment or two.

Mr. C. Yes, if it were your own Do you intend to keep it ?

Eus. If nobody makes inquiry about it.

Mr. C. Did any one see you take it up ?

Eus. No, father.

Ser. I should never rest till I knew who owned it.

Eus. Let the owner show himself, and certainly the ring shall not long remain in my hands. No, that would be as bad as if I had stolen it. We must give every one his own.

Mr. C. Then you will not be so well pleased ?

Eus. Why not, father ? I own, I did not think of any thing at first but my good luck in finding such a jewel. I looked upon it as already my own property ; but my sister has given me an idea of the anxiety which he must feel who lost it. I should be much happier, in putting an end to his uneasiness, than in keeping this ring, which would make me blush every time I looked at it.

Ser. There is so much pleasure in comforting the unhappy. For that reason, I cannot imagine that Rufus or any one else could be so ill-natured as to keep my Diana, if he knew how sorry I am about her.

Mr. C. My dear children, I rejoice in being your father ! Let such generous sentiments continue to spring up and gain strength in your hearts. They will be the foundation of your own happiness and that of your fellow-creatures.

Ser. You set us an example, father. How should we have other sentiments ?

Eus. I will go and show my prize to every body ; and we can advertise both together in the papers, that we have lost a greyhound and found a ring.

Mr. C. Not so fast, my dear; there are precautions to be taken. There might be some people who would claim the ring, without being the owners.

Se. O, I should be as cunning as they. I would ask them first how it was made, and I would not give it to any but him that told me very particularly.

Mr. C. That way is not certain neither. A person may have seen it upon the owner's finger, and come here before him to demand it.

Ser. Ah, father, I see you know better how to manage than we do.

Mr. C. The loser will take care to make every inquiry after so valuable an article. So we must wait.

Eus. But if they should not think of doing so?

Ser. We thought of doing so for Diana; certainly others will for a diamond.

Mr. C. Meanwhile I shall take care of it, and do you be cautious not to speak of it to any body. [*Exit.*

Eu. It is very stupid, however, not to be allowed to talk, when one has any thing so agreeable to tell. I should be so happy to show every body my ring!

Ser. And why, since you neither can, nor would keep it? There is no great merit in finding any thing valuable in the street.

Eu. That's true; but what I tell you is very true too.

Ser. People say of the ladies that they cannot keep a secret. Let us see which of us will be the most discreet.

Eus. For fear my secret should want to escape, I will think of nothing but Diana; and now I'll go to the printing-office with the advertisement.

Ser. Go, brother, do not lose a moment. But what does Lionel want with us ?

Enter Lionel.

Lio. Where are you going, Eustace ?

Eus. I have something particular to do ?

Lio. O, before you go, you must listen to a story I have to tell. It will make you laugh, I'll warrant. Ha, ha, ha !

Eus. I have not time for laughing now.

Lio. You will laugh in spite of yourself. Only listen. We have got full satisfaction.

Eus. Full satisfaction ! Of whom ?

Lio. Of Rufus. He has lost his father's ring. Ha, ha, ha ! (*Eustace and Serina look at each other with surprise.*

Ser. His father's ring ?

Lio. It is true. It was given to him this morning to take to the jeweller's, to have the middle diamond re-set, that had fallen out.

[Eustace jogs Serina, who makes a sign to him to be silent. He had it when he came here ; but as he went away quite flustered with anger, the case and ring must have dropped out of his pocket as he whisked along.

Ser. And have you seen him since he lost it ? How does he look ?

Lio. Frightened out of his wits.

Ser. Does his father know it ?

Lio. There he has drawn himself into a fresh difficulty, by telling a great fib. When his father asked him if he had given the ring to the jeweller, he answered with the greatest assurance that he had.

Ser. Unhappy creature!

Lio. Why do you pity him?

Eus. Indeed he is to be pitied.

Lio. He? I wish you had seen what game I made of him!

Ser. What did you find so comical in all that?

Lio. How! don't you take the jest? To see him running from shop to shop, inquiring about his ring, and pulling every one by the skirt that passed. I stuck close to him, to enjoy his distress, and at last he came up to me—'Have you not found it? Have you heard nothing of it?' What is it to me? said I. Am I your ring-keeper? 'If you knew what it was worth?' So much the better for the finder. 'And then my father! what will he say?' Why, he'll talk to you with a good stick.

Se. Fie, master Lionel, that was very cruel of you.

Lio. He had not more feeling for you.

Eus. Should we be ill-natured then, even towards those that are so themselves?

Lio. O, revenge is sweet, and I never have any compassion for those that offend me. If I had the good luck to find his ring, he should not have it very soon.

Ser. Would you keep it?

Lio. O, no. I would give it to him after his father had threshed him well.

Eus. I should never have thought you so ill-natured, Lionel.

Ser. And I cannot believe it, though I hear it from his own mouth; you were so much concerned about

my poor greyhound. It seems, it was not in earnest.

Lio. It was from the bottom of my heart. I love those dearly whom I do love; but, when I hate any one, I——

Enter Rufus.

Heh! there he comes. [*Points at him with his finger.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Ruf. Pray now forgive me. I have been very bad, to be sure, but I have been full as unfortunate. I am punished now, and well punished too, for——

Lio. Have you stuck up handbills about your ring?

Ruf. I dare not appear before my father, and I don't know where to hide myself.

Lio. I would wager that the ring is hanging at Diana's tail. We shall find them both together.

Ru. I've deserved your jeers; but for pity's sake—

Eus. Make yourself easy, Rufus; your ring is here.

Ruf. [*amazed.*] What, have you it? You my ring?

Lio. [*aside to Serina.*] He is making game of him. That is right.

Ruf. Is it really so? O, on my knees I'll—— But stay; you shall first hear how wicked I am. [*Exit.*

Ser. What does he mean? He has gone off.

Eus. I am afraid the boy has lost his wits.

Lio. Your joke for all that may cost you dear, if he bring his father to demand the ring.

Eus. Do you think then that I wish to keep it?

Lio. Why, have you actually the ring?

Eus. Certainly I have it, otherwise I should not have said so. I picked it up close by our door.

Lio. Indeed you are too good. He does not deserve to be so happy. You should have left him a little longer in pain, at least.

Ser. How, Lionel? Does not my brother's example move you? Do you know that you lose ground now very much, in his friendship and mine?

Enter Mr. Calvert.

Mr. C. What is the matter with Rufus? I saw him from my window come in here all in tears.

Ser. The poor boy was half dead.

Eus. It was he who lost the ring which I found. It belongs to his father.

Mr. C. Have you convinced him of the meanness of his behavior towards us?

Lio. Dear sir, no. Diana has not been so much as mentioned.

Mr. C. At least I would have insisted upon his returning her. He should not hear of his ring without that.

Eus. Ah, father, my heart would not let me be so harsh. I saw Rufus so afflicted.

Ser. Though I love Diana very well, I could not possibly think of her just then, nor of any thing but the grief of that unfortunate boy.

Mr. C. You both have acted generously, and are my dear children, my best friends, all my joy, and all my pride. None but base souls would insult the enemy that is fallen. But where is Rufus? Why did he not ask for the ring as he went away?

Eus. He was so transported with joy, that he knew little what he was doing.

Ser. He ran to the door, and went out as if he were crazy.

Eus. O, father, did you but know how overjoyed I am that you approve of my behavior, and my sister's!

Mr. C. How could you believe me insensible to a generous action?

Eus. Because you had forbidden me——

Mr. C. I forbade you to speak unguardedly about the ring, but I did not tell you to keep it when the owner should appear.

Enter Rufus, with the greyhound under his arm.

Ser. [*with an exclamation of joy.*] Diana! my dear Diana!

[She runs to her, takes her in her arms, and caresses her.

Ruf. You see how much I was to blame, and how little I deserved your generosity. Can you pardon me this fraud, and my unworthy behavior? [Perceiving Mr. Calvert.

Ah, sir, how bad I must appear in your eyes!

Mr. C. A person is no longer unworthy, when he acknowledges his fault, and endeavors, as you do, to repair it. Here is your father's ring.

Ruf. I am ashamed to have offended such excellent children. What a difference between them and me! how wicked am I, and how generous are they!

Ser. It is only a little prank of yours, master Rufus, and you would not have let the day pass without returning Diana to me.

Ruf. You think too well of me. I had hid her up in the garret, and——

Mr. C. We don't wish to know any more. It is

sufficient that you are sorry for what you have done. You now perceive that bad actions make God and man our enemies, and are sooner or later always discovered. I will take the liberty of proposing to you, as a model, the conduct of my children. How should I thank heaven for sending me such gifts. You see, Rufus, the noblest and most certain revenge is that of doing kindness, and that nothing is more worthy of a great spirit, than to repay ill-nature with kindness and good offices.

Ruf. I feel it with the most lively sorrow. [*To Eus. and Ser.*] Will you ever forgive me ?

Eus. [*taking him by the hand.*] Yes, from this moment, and sincerely.

Ser. I have my Diana again, and all is forgotten.

Ruf. [*to Lio.*] We should be unworthy of this example, if we did not follow it.

Lio. I am as much ashamed as you, and this lesson shall not be lost on me.

Ruf. I have just confessed all to my father. In proportion as he was angry with me, he was touched with your generosity. He requests permission to come, in about an hour hence, to thank you, and to beg your acceptance of a small token of his gratitude.

Mr. C. No, there is no occasion for any presents. My children desire no reward for doing well, except their own good feelings. Besides, restoring to a person his property is no more than a strict duty.

Eus. How pleasing to perform that duty! I have gained a friend for my whole life; have I not, Rufus?

Ruf. If I were worthy of that honor. I shall do every thing in my power to be so.

Lio. Do not exclude me from your friendship. I was no better than Rufus; but I have just now felt how noble a passion revenge may be made.

Ser. [*caressing the greyhound.*] Ah, you little runaway! this will teach you another time to stray away from your masters; you have passed a night in the prison for it. Offer to do so again, and you'll see——Well, what would be the consequence? O, no, whatever you do, I find I shall always be fond of you.

THE COMMODORE'S RETURN.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

COMMODORE FREEPORT.
MRS. FREEPORT.
MELISSA, CONSTANTINE, ARABELLA, MATILDA, *their Children.*
LIEUT. BOARDHAM, *betrothed to Melissa.*
MR. ASCHAM, *tutor to the Children.*
THOMAS, *the Gardener.*
FANNY, *his Wife.*
COLIN, *their Son.*
MATTHEWS, *an old Tenant of the Commodore.*
Young Men and Maidens of the Village.

SCENE,—*the Garden of Commodore Freeport's Country Seat, close by the sea side.*

SCENE I. *Thomas and Colin.*

Thomas is raking one of the walks, Colin runs in trembling and out of breath, as in a fright; he throws his arms round his father, and clings fast to him.

Thomas.

WELL, what now, you little blockhead? what now? Where are you running in such a fluster?

Col. Ah, father, father, I am frightened out of my wits. I'm dead.

Tho. It's very lucky you're able to tell me of it. But what is the matter?

Col. A ghost! a ghost!

Tho. What, in broad day-light? I believe you are gibing your father. Well, what is it like? a beast or a man?

Col. It is—it is like a man.

Tho. Silly oaf! why then it is a man. Has it a mouth, and eyes, and hands, and feet?

Col. Yes, a mouth, and eyes, and hands, and feet, like one of us, and yet it is not like *we*, for all that.

Tho. What nonsense is all this?

Col. O, if you had but seen it! bless us! it is the ghost of a Turk.

Tho. [*a little frightened.*] The ghost of a Turk?

Col. Yes, indeed, father. You showed me some Turks when we were in London; well, it is the same for all the world. A long gown down to his heels, a yellow thing like a lady's muff upon his head, a long carving-knife by his side, a great black beard, and a dead man's face over his own.

[A noise is heard behind the hedge row.

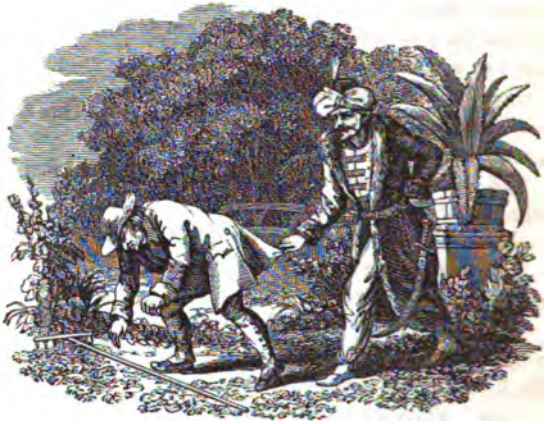
O, there it is, father; there is the ghost, the Turk. Help, murder! [*He runs out.*

Tho. [*alarmed*] Colin, Colin! won't you come back?

[Colin, instead of returning, runs away precipitately. Thomas tries to follow him, but his rake falling, trips him up, and while he is entangled with it, Colin escapes.

A little coward, to leave me here all alone! And then, if what he said were true. I do not like meddling with your Turks, not I. By the mass, I will not stay here to meet with him.

[While he stoops to take up his rake, the Commodore, dressed in a long red gown, with a turban and a mask, comes softly



up to him and pulls him by the skirt. Thomas turning perceives him, and attempts to run away ; but finding himself held fast, roars out.

Tho. Help ! murder ! A ghost ! A Turk !

Com. [*putting his hand on Thomas's mouth to silence him.*] Why, Thomas, do not act the child ! Don't you know me ?

Tho. [*without looking.*] Avaunt ! none but Satan knows you. I am none of your acquaintance.

Com. O, I see what deceives you. [*He takes off his mask.*] Look at me now.

Tho. [*hiding his face with his hands.*] What, I look at your terrible visage ? No, let me go, or I all cry out ten times louder.

Com. [*trying to part his hands.*] What, are you afraid of me ?

Tho. Say no more. You want to roast me. O, how hot you are !

Com. [*letting go his hands.*] Why, Thomas, are you mad ? Do not shake so, man. Can't you recollect my voice ?

Tho. It's a main hollow ghostly voice ; that's certain.

Com. Only look at me between your fingers.

Tho. Well,well—I will—but get a little farther off.

Com. [*drawing back*] There,now you are satisfied.

Tho. [*retreating also.*] Are you a good way off ? Stop awhile. [*Separates his hands a little and looks.*] Eh ! what ! the Commodore ? Is it you, sir ?

Com. Why yes, Thomas, it is I, your master.

Tho. [*showing his face a little more.*] Are you sure though it is not his ghost ?

Com. Nay, Thomas, I can hardly take you for the same man. I did not think you so chicken-hearted.

Tho. [*letting his hands fall, but still looking at the Commodore.*] O yes, I now see it is you.

[Taking off his hat, and advancing towards him.

Dear master, I beg pardon for not knowing you at first. It was my son, a little blockhead, who put all these frights into my head. [*Beginning to bluster.*] A ghost truly ! Aye, just as if I believed in ghosts ! But, after all, your honor has got a huge ugly cap there. For my part I think it is dangerous jesting with such outlandish gear. Suppose one were to remain a Turk all one's life. I remember, as well

as if it were yesterday, my mother's telling me a hundred times how she saw one who had heard of a thing which happened in a family, as long ago as any one could—O, it is all very true what I am telling you, I assure you——

Com. Well, come, you shall tell me your story another time. Is there nobody within hearing?

Tho. Nobody, sir; for that silly boy of mine will hardly venture back. He is afraid! Ha, ha, ha! Yet, only mind, master, if you had been a ghost, he would have let you twist his father's neck off.

Com. Are my wife and children all here? Is the tutor with them?

Tho. O, certainly, sir. They staid in the country on purpose to prepare a revel against your return, as they knew you would come straight hither from Portsmouth. How happy they will all be! But what a blockhead am I, not to go and tell them the news, and spread it through all the neighborhood! [*Going.*] There will be rare doings.

Com. [*stopping him.*] Avast! avast! it is the very thing that I do not wish you to do at present.

Tho. How! won't your honor make one at the revel? It is all on account of your honor's return, and the whole neighborhood will join in the rejoicing.

Com. They are very kind.

Tho. By the mass, they have good reason. There is not a set of tenants in England happier under any landlord than your honor's are; and they love you accordingly. All the bells should have been ringing before now. I wonder what the ringers are about.

Com. Thomas, have a little patience. I shall show myself in proper time.

Tho. Proper time, sir? Alack, it is easy talking; but, for my simple part, I shall be out of patience if you be long about it.

Com. And I shall be out of patience if you are not more discreet. Do not deprive me of the satisfaction which I promised myself at my return! Would you, by way of welcoming me home, oblige me to discharge you from my service?

Tho. Nay; that is enough; now I am dumb. Yet I must say, sir, it was ill done of your honor to leave us in uncertainty so long. We thought you were either drowned or taken prisoner. You cannot think, sir, how dull it made us. O, dear master! if we had lost you, and been obliged to put on mourning, instead of keeping a revel! The very thought makes my blood run cold. We would rather the war should have lasted ten years longer.

Com. I thank you, Thomas, for this language of unaffected friendship. It presages, I hope, a reception still more tender from my family.

Tho. Then why, sir, not go to them directly?

Com. No, no. My design is to double the pleasure of my return by an agreeable surprise. Only let me speak with my children's tutor.

Tho. With Mr. Ascham?

Com. Yes. I wrote to him from Portsmouth, to prepare him. You and he shall be the only persons in the secret. But I hear somebody coming down

this next walk. Snug's the word, Thomas! Be discreet! [*Exit, behind the hedgerow.*

Tho. [*alone.*] Discreet, say you? Aye, it is easy when one has nothing to talk of; but when one knows as much as I know. This secret, I feel begins to swell me already. [*Turning, he sees Mr. Ascham.*] Thank my stars! they send me at least somebody to talk to.

Enter Mr. Ascham.

Tho. [*running towards him.*] Joy, joy, Mr. Ascham! The fleet is come; the commodore is come; you are come; and I am come.

[Flings up his hat for joy.

Mr. A. Is Mr. Freeport here?

Tho. [*with an air of importance.*] Do you think he is not, sir, when I tell you so? I am in the whole plot, as well as you.

Enter Commodore Freeport.

Com. My secret was well trusted. I see, Thomas, I need only to depend upon you at all times.

[He takes Mr. Ascham's hand.

My dear Ascham, I am glad to see you once more!

Mr. A. Sir, this will be a day of festivity for us.

Com. Provided Thomas do not disconcert all my plan, with his silly joy and chattering.

Tho. Nay, look ye there! did not your honor tell me that Mr. Ascham was in the secret? Did I blab the least word to any body in the world?

Mr. A. True; because you saw nobody but me.

Com. Let us not lose a moment. Thomas, you must hide me in the green-house, until the moment of making my appearance.

Tho. That I will, and welcome ; and you will find it in good order, I'll warrant.

Com. That is not all ; you must plant your son on the watch, to let me know if any one approach.

Tho. But, if madam herself should take a walk towards the green-house, or some of the young folks, I could hardly hinder them from going in.

Mr.A. Pshaw ! a man of your sense will easily find excuse to prevent them.

Tho. Why aye, sir, as you say——

Com. Don't forget some good fruit for us, Thomas.

Tho. O, sir, do not fear ! I'll warrant your honor shall show the finest melons and pine-apples, and every fruit of the season, that is to be seen in this county, at your table to-day. [*Exit.*

Com. Do you imagine, Ascham, that my wife suspects any thing of our preparations ?

Mr.A. It would have been impossible for me to conceal them from her ; I chose therefore to make them in concert with her, while she supposed that she should surprise you agreeably with this revel at your return. I told her that your cruise might perhaps continue longer. She was happy, therefore, to amuse the wearisomeness of your absence, by occupations which would show you how her mind was employed during that time.

Com. Thus I shall be the giver of the entertainment with which she proposes to receive me. My dear Ascham, your conduct charms me !

Mr.A. I hope you will be pleased with our performance. Indeed every one was eager to contribute

to your pleasure. I have already instructed a few young men and maids amongst your tenants, and they know their parts to admiration.

Com. And I have brought my future son-in-law, Lieut. Boardman, who behaved so gallantly you remember, during the war. What recommended him to my notice was his attacking a pirate sloop in the East-Indies, with only an armed boat, and taking her. These Turkish dresses were part of her spoil, and we put them on for this frolic the better to disguise ourselves. O, I forgot to mention too, that I brought a band of music from Portsmouth. I left them to refresh themselves at a public house close by our park; here, within a stone's throw of us.

Mr. A. So much the better; for we were but indifferently provided for in respect of music.

Com. I should be sorry if any thing be wanting to our festivity. I would not have a single tenant of mine unconcerned in it. I hope and flatter myself they have reason to rejoice in my prosperity. It has always been my endeavor to make those happy whom Providence has placed immediately under me, both on sea and land; for he only half serves his country, Ascham, who fights her battles with success abroad, but returns to be detested for injustice and oppression by his poor dependents at home.

Mr. A. Excellent sentiments! You are deservedly beloved by your tenants, commodore, I can answer, without flattery; and that your public service has been approved, your reputation and your sovereign's favor sufficiently testify.

Com. [*taking him by the hand.*] These, my friend, are the sources from which every man of spirit should seek to derive his happiness and satisfaction.

[Colin is seen approaching by the hedge-row, and enters with a basket of flowers on his arm.

Col. This ghost of a Turk cannot be very ill-natured. How friendly he talks with Mr. Ascham!

Mr. A. I hear footsteps.

Com. Yes, I must hide.

[He turns to go behind the hedge-row and meets Colin full in the face, who trembles and stares at him awhile, but at length, in a transport of joy, cries out,

Col. O la; it is his honor; it is the commodore!

Com. Come hither, my little godson!

[Colin throws down his basket, and runs eagerly to him, jumping for joy.

Softly, my man; softly; I do not wish any one to know I am arrived. Do not you tell, for the world!

Col. What, sir, neither madam, nor the children?

Mr. A. It is from them particularly you must conceal it.

Enter Thomas, not seeing Colin.

Tho. Now every thing is ready for your honor.

Col. Well, I am sure! It was not I that told father however.

Tho. [*seeing Col.*] Plague on it, we are all ruined! This monkey will go and blab. I was thinking of sending him on a message a mile or two off.

Mr. A. [*patting Colin on the head.*] Nay, I dare say he will be as discreet as yourself. Won't you, my little friend?

Col. O, never fear, sir; I can keep a secret as well as another. It won't be the first time.

Tho. No ! when was the first time ?

Col. I'fegs t'other day, when you threshed me to make me tell whether I had stolen the apples off our tree at home. Did I tell you it was I ?

Tho. It was you that stole my apples then, was it ? Stop a moment ! [*Colin runs behind Com.F.*] O, you shall pay for them !

Mr.A. Agreed, if he say a word about the commodore.

Com. And a guinea for his reward, if he is silent.

Tho. Do you hear that, Colin ? a guinea !

Col. Tut ! I would have held my tongue for nothing, out of regard for my godfather.

Com. There's a good boy. Well, now for our concealment.

Tho. And you, Colin, stand here. If any body come up this walk, as it leads no where but to the green-house, run thither immediately, and let his honor know. But if you open your lips, 'ware the apples, I'll cut your ears off with the commodore's cutlass there. [*They go out.*

SCENE II.

Colin. [*gathering up his flowers and making a nosegay.*] If they know nothing, unless from me, they will not know much. But the poor children, miss Arabella, master Constantine, and miss Matilda ; it grieves me to think they should not know their father is here. Suppose I were just to whisper it to miss Matilda ; she is very fond of me ; and, although she be the youngest of them all, she is the drollest little body. Ah, but she would tell it to miss

Arabella, and miss Arabella to master Constantine, and master Constantine to Gatty, and Gatty to miss Melissa, and miss Melissa to her mother; and then every body would be in the secret. There would be a guinea lost, and my ears cut off. O, it is better to pretend to be dumb. In the first place, if I do not speak, I shall tell nobody any secrets, that is plain. [*Clapping his hand on his mouth.*] There, you are locked up till to-morrow morning!

Enter Constantine, Arabella, and Matilda.

Con. Good morrow, little Colly.

[Clapping Colin gently on the shoulder.

Ara. Mr. Colin's most obedient humble servant!

[Curtsying to him with affected solemnity.

Mat. How do you do, my little man?

[Taking him by the hand in a friendly manner. Colin bows to her, and gives her a nosegay.

Con. You are all alone?

[Colin answers him with a nod.

Mat. Mother wants to speak with your father. Where is he?

[Colin points the way by which Thomas went out.

Ara. Are you making game of us? Have you lost your tongue?

[Colin looks about him without answering.

Con. Well, but speak.

Ara. Hah! I'll teach you another sort of drollery.

[Slapping him on the hands.

Mat. [*holding Ara.*] Softly, sister! Do not hurt my little Colin.

[Colin looks kindly at Matilda.

Con. Let him speak, or I'll—What, is he dumb

Ara. Or deaf?

Mat. Perhaps something may have happened to him. Is any thing the matter, my little man ?

[Colin makes signs in the negative. Upon which the two girls fall upon him, shaking him, pulling him, pinching him, and tickling him, crying out all at once,

You must speak ! you must speak ! or we will know the reason why !

Mat. Have done, or I shall join him against you.

Ar. A fine champion you would be to defend him !

Mat. [*to Con.*] Brother, you are the eldest; make her have done; pray do. I will talk to him gently, and perhaps I may get a word or two from him.

Con. [*haughtily.*]. No, I insist, he shall obey me when I order him.

Mat. Let me try what I can do. Colin, my good little Colin, answer me, if it be only one word.

[Colin smiles, but makes signs that he is not to speak.

Do you know now that I shall be angry with you too ? But stay. Arabella, go and fetch his father, mother wants him, you know.

Ara. Yes, yes, I'll tell Thomas of it. He will make him speak, perhaps.

[As she is going, Colin stands full in her way to stop her shaking his head.

Con. [*with an air of authority.*] What, does he dare to stop my sister ? Let me manage him.

Mat. [*holding Con.*] Why, you see he does her no harm. Well, Colin, go yourself, and bring your father; tell him that mother wants him; will you ?

[Colin nods consent, and goes out. The children follow him with their eyes.

Ara. He can hear at least, if he cannot speak.

Mat. I knew I could make him do whatever I had a mind.

Con. He did well to get away. But I will make him pay for not obeying me.

Mat. [*seeing Thomas approach.*] O, here comes Thomas. We will now know what is the matter with my little friend.

Enter Thomas.

[All the children run up to Thomas, and jump about him.

Tho. Good morrow, master Constantine. Good morrow, young ladies. How do you do to-day ?

Mat. O, very well, very well ; but tell us what is the matter with your son, poor little Colin ?

Tho. The matter with him ? A good appetite ; that is always the matter with him, I think.

Mat. Then he is not sick ?

Tho. He sick ?

Con. Then he is very obstinate.

Ara. The little monkey made game of us.

Mat. O, how you talk !

Tho. What, miss, made game of you ?

Mat. I was afraid he was struck dumb.

Tho. He dumb ?

Ara. We pinched and tickled him, but not a word.

Tho. Is it possible ? why he bawled loud enough to deafen me here this morning, and frighten me too. I might have been afraid at least, if I had not a stout heart.

Con. As for us, he did not vouchsafe to honor us with a single word.

Tho. [*smiling.*] No ? a little knave ! only mind his cunning ! He has ten times more wit than his father.

Mat Wit ? how, in not speaking ?

Tho. Where could he have hit on such a thought

Ara. What do you mean ?

Tho. And then, people will talk that the world is growing worse and worse. By the mass, children have now-a-days more sense than all their family.

Ara. For my part, I believe they are both out of their sense. The one did not speak at all, and the other speaks without answering us.

Tho. O, he knew very well what he did not say, and I know very well what I do say.

Ara. That is more than we do.

Tho. Well, there is no harm done. But where is Madam ? Colin told me that she asked for me.

Con. He told you !

Mat. Then he can speak ?

Con. O, if he can speak, I'll make him speak.

Ara. Let us go and find him.

Tho. Aye, aye, go. He has walked into the park. You will hardly come up with him. He has a pair of legs if he has not a tongue.

[Constantine and Arabella go out.

Mat. O, dear Thomas, pray tell Colin to speak a little, if it be only for my sake. I do so like to talk with him !

Tho. Yes, yes, let me manage. I'll talk to him, and he shall talk to you, and we'll all talk to one another very soon. O, what talk we shall have !

Ma. That's charming ! I will run after my brother and sister, and hinder them from teasing him. [*Ex.*

Tho. [*alone.*] I think I did right to send him a pretty way off. These young ones would have

mauled him so, that he must have told his secret at last. But did ever any one see such a sly fetch! Not to talk for fear of blabbing! One could not have hit upon a more cunning scheme. But here comes Madam with miss Melissa. Now for it; friend Thomas, take care of yourself. One man against two women; and hampered with a secret besides! It is hard odds.

Enter Mrs. Freeport and Melissa.

Mrs.F. Well, Thomas, I must come to seek you myself. I sent the children for you an hour ago.

Tho. Madam, I was this moment coming to you.

Mrs.F. I wanted to speak with you about this revel. Mr. Ascham has just now mentioned that it would be proper to have a general rehearsal of it. Perhaps it is to divert my uneasiness; but he assures me it cannot be long before my husband will be here. This idea, which seems to hasten his return, still more——

Tho. He is perhaps not so far off as people think. What would you say, madam—[*Turning aside*] Hist! what were *you* going to say, Thomas?

Mrs.F. Have you heard any news of him?

Tho. News, madam? By the mass, what I know is truer than news. [*Aside.*] Where the plague is my tongue running?

Mrs.F. What would you say, Thomas? Explain.

Tho. The matter is this, madam—Lookye, you understand—When I come from market, I put the best leg foremost to get home; not that I have so fine a woman to my wife, madam, as you are, either!

nor so fine a daughter as miss Melissa here. [*Asi.*] Plague on't ! I'll turn it off some way. [*To them.*] Just so for all the world, in a manner, as a body may say, the commodore is galloping home here as fast as he can. That is a clear case, I *defer* it you else.

Mrs.F. Ah, when will that happy moment come, that I may welcome him to my expecting arms ?

Tho. Who knows how soon ? I will bestir myself, however ; perhaps that will hasten him. I wish every pull of my rake were a lash to his horse's sides. Nor would I let the young lieutenant lag behind neither, miss Melissa. [*Melissa smiles.*

Mrs.F. Well, it is very obliging of you, Thomas.

Tho. Why, madam, the truth is, I am sorry to see you melancholy. You are like flowers *impelled* by the dew, as the song says. But hang tears ; the sun will come, and dry up all sorrow presently. Joy ! joy ! madam, here comes Mr. Ascham ; he seems full of joy.

Enter Mr. Ascham.

Mr.A. All goes right, madam. I have sent to assemble the young men and maids of the hamlet, who are to figure in our pageant. We are almost ready to begin. I was very well pleased yesterday to see them all so orderly, and so perfect in their parts, and I hope the general rehearsal to-day will amuse you, if you do us the honor to be present at it.

Mrs.F. I shall certainly not deprive myself of so agreeable an entertainment. I should otherwise pay an ill compliment to the obliging exertions of your zeal and friendship for our family.

Mr.A. Madam, I could not receive a more flattering reward. But indeed my cares were already repaid in the reflection of seconding your wishes, and anticipating those of your husband.

Mrs.F. How I please myself with the idea of his surprise and satisfaction !

Tho. He won't perhaps be the most surprised in the company either.

[Mr. A. looks sternly at Thomas.

Mrs.F. What do you mean by that, Thomas ?

Tho. [*embarrassed.*] Why,madam, with regard—with regard to that there—I think you will be as much surprised to see him return fresh and hearty; full of health, honor, and joy. Miss Melissa too will perhaps be surprised to see her young intended. I'll wage my spade to one of your pins, that she will blush like a rose. Marry, we shall all be surprised, for so good a master as his honor is not a sight to be seen with indifference.

Mr.A. I think, madam, it would affect you in a pleasing manner, to see the impatience with which all the neighborhood wait his arrival. At every step I meet some one or other who inquires eagerly for him. I figure to myself a numerous family inquiring for their father, their brother, their son, their husband. What will be their joy when they see him returned ?

Mrs.F. I can imagine their transports by my own. But when will he return ! I shall shudder with apprehension until I behold him safe.

Mr.A. What can give rise to your terrors ? This

is not the season when thirst of glory might expose him to danger.

Mel. Ah! mother, do you remember those dismal days when we could not take up the newspaper without trembling? when we dreaded to see his name in every list of killed and wounded?

Mr. A. At present therefore indulge the sweets of hope. The tranquillity of peace leaves us no subject of inquietude.

Mrs. F. Ah! sweet peace, many a mother, many a wife blesses its return.

Tho. Ay, and many a gardener. Ah, if you had seen a little of the world, madam, as I have. You would not think that I served during the French war. Yes, I served—in a garden. There came some of those mischievous hussars. In an hour's time not a single hedge was left standing in our village. Then the statues in our garden, the Apollos, the Jupiters, and the Mercurys, those they soon turned topsy-turvy. I should not have cared a straw for them; but my poor melons! my fruit and plants! it grieved me to the heart to see them demolished. And yet I was not the head gardener. Now that I am gardener in chief, only think if that were to happen. I should throw myself head foremost in the draw-well. But come, a fig for those madcaps. It is a peace-time now; huzza! Come, Mr. Ascham, we'll go and settle this business.

[*Ex. Mr. A. and Tho.*

Mrs. F. Honest Thomas's cheerfulness has enlivened me a little. I find myself now much more at

ease. I feel nothing now but hope. Yes, Melissa, my heart tells me, we shall soon see them once more.

Mel. Alas! mother, I rise every day, indulging this flattering idea, and every day it vanishes.

Mrs. F. Our murmurs against heaven are always unjust. How did I execrate the cruel war, which snatched my husband from me! Well, peace was made, he returned, covered with laurels, and admired by his countrymen, whose commerce he protected at sea. Shall we grudge another short absence in the service of his country? He will come home when his presence is most necessary for the education of his children. He will bring with him the person whom your choice and ours has destined to be your husband. Ah, my dear, how many women in the world envy our lot!

Mel. True, mother; but, for my part, your kindness hitherto has rendered me so happy, that I cannot support the least alteration in my happiness.

Mrs. F. Come to my arms, my dear child, and resume your natural gaiety, it becomes you so well. Do not let us poison, by an appearance of sorrow, the satisfaction which these good people enjoy, while they make us the witnesses of their exertions.

Enter Matilda and Arabella.

Mat. [*running to her mother.*] Mother, mother! we are bringing you the good farmer Matthews.

Ara. [*following her.*] Here he is, here he is!

Enter Farmer Matthews.

He supports himself with a stick in one hand, and leans with the other upon Constantine. When he perceives Mrs. Free-

port, he endeavors to double his pace and totters. Mrs. F. and Melissa advance towards him.

Con. Lean heavier on my shoulder, sir; you won't hurt me.

Mel. Softly, Mr. Matthews.

Mrs. F. Take care you don't fall.

Matt. They came to collect my children, and all the young people of the hamlet. Is the commodore returned? I should never forgive myself if he were.

Mrs. F. No, Mr. Matthews, we are expecting him.

Matt. Ah, so much the better. Which way does he come? tell me. I have a good head still, but my legs fail me. I should set out long before the rest, to be up with him at the same time.

Mrs. F. How! would you go to meet him, weak as you are?

Matt. [*with vivacity.*] Would I? He has all his life hastened to meet my necessities; do you think then, madam, that I would sit still, and wait his coming? I would sooner be carried by my children.

Mel. No, Mr. Matthews. I'm sure my father would be angry if you exposed yourself to so much fatigue.

Matt. Why, madam, it is for my own sake as well as his. The sight of him is necessary to me. He is like the sun that cheers my declining life.

Mrs. F. But, friend Matthews, at your age——

Matt. My age is the cause why I have more obligations to him than the young ones. I have known the commodore, madam, longer than you have. Many a time have I set him riding upon this very stick. He was not so big as master Constantine here when he began to be my benefactor. I was poor

then, and he had no more than his pocket-money. Well, he found means to relieve me out of many difficulties. It was in vain that I told him only half my distress. He could guess more than I could hide from him. As soon as he came to his estate, he made me a present of the cottage which I inhabit, and leased me some lands round about it, but on such favorable terms, that I soon got above the world. Thanks to his friendship, I have been able to bring up all my children, and to settle them in easy circumstances; and, as I have done this through his means, I count them as much his family as mine, and love them the better on that score.

Mrs. F. You know that his friendship for you still continues. There are few of his letters in which he does not mention you.

Matt. [*overjoyed.*] Can it be! But I believe it, and it is no more than he ought. For why? he has done good to a great many of his tenants; he has rebuilt their cottages when thrown down by storms, or burnt; he has helped them in bad seasons; he has forgiven them their rent. Let them bless him, let them love him, let them revere him! but I should be main vexed if I thought that, next to his family, any body loved him better than I do. I mean the same to you, madam; and to you also, miss.

The Children. [*jumping about him.*] And us too, Mr. Matthews; don't you?

Matt. I must needs love you, my dear little ones, who are my benefactor's children. And yet sometimes you make me angry.

Mat. We make you angry?

Matt. Yes, you sometimes make yourselves too uneasy about me. It looks as if I were so old, so very old.

Mat. O no, you are quite hearty still. Hold, I will dress you up like a beau. There is my nosegay; I will stick it in your button-hole.

Ara. I have a fine riband here. Give me your hat, and I will fix a cockade in it.

Con. [*standing on tiptoe to reach farmer Matthews' ear.*] The next time you come to the hall, I'll have a glass of our best wine for you.

Matt. Sweet little creatures! you are all *heart*, like your father. Come and let me kiss you.—Madam, will you give me leave——

Mrs. F. Nay, it gives me the highest pleasure. Nothing can be more agreeable to my eyes than to see my children in the arms of old age. It is the picture of innocence and virtue.

[The children throw themselves into Matthews's arms, who kisses them. Music is heard.

Matt. [*starting up briskly.*] What do I hear? Can it be the commodore?

Mel. Would to heaven it were!

Mrs. F. No, farmer, it is the young folks of the hamlet, coming to amuse us with a rehearsal of their entertainment.

Matt. Then I'll see it. I figured in these merry-makings formerly; but now I can hardly hobble to keep in sight of them. Give me leave to place myself at the foot of this tree. I planted this very tree when a child. We were then about the same age

at present it is a good deal younger than I am.

Mrs. F. No, sir; you shall sit down beside me.

Mel. Yes, between us both.

Matt. I, madam? it is too great an honor. Before all the folks too!

Mrs. F. I hope the folks will learn by our example to respect age and honesty. Come, farmer.

[Mrs. Freeport and Melissa lead him towards a green bank, and make him sit between them. Arabella and Matilda settle his coat skirts, and Constantine assists him to take a firm hold of his cane, in order to support himself.

Matt. I wish my joy may let me live till I see the commodore.

[The young men and maidens enter on different sides, and join in the middle. After walking in procession round the stage two and two, they file off before the bank, on which Mrs. F. and the others are seated.

RECITATIVE.

BY A YOUNG VILLAGER.

Let the soft pipe's melodious swell
In lively notes our jocund purpose tell!
Let the sprightly tabor sound,
To welcome home the brave
From perils of the distant wave,
Safe returned to Freedom's ground.

AIR.

FIRST STRAIN, A VILLAGE MAIDEN.

Full long the stern commands of war
Have sent our chiefs and warriors far
From Freedom's plenteous shore;
Now white-robed peace has smoothed the main,
And homeward led the hardy train,
To taste her joys once more.

SECOND STRAIN, A HUSBANDMAN.

Commerce and peace, with bloodless toil,
Unite to cull the wealthy spoil
Of nature's boundless reign;

No more the lily and the rose
Shall marshal hosts of bannered foes,
By land or on the main. .....

THIRD STRAIN, A VILLAGE MAIDEN.

Our ships from port to port shall sail,
(While wealth descends in every gale,)
And plough the ocean o'er,
And free as air the wave shall be
To waft the sailor home to me,
With his brave commodore.

CHORUS.

Welcome, thrice welcome, be the brave,
From perils of the distant wave,
Returned to Freedom's ground!
Let pipe and tabor's mingled swell,
Our brave commander's welcome tell
To listening hills around.

[The chorus being ended, the young men and maids join two and two, and walk back in procession round Mrs. Freeport, &c. saluting her, and scattering flowers as they pass.

Mrs. F. My dear friends, how your joy affects me! What would I give at this moment to share it with my worthy husband!

Mat. O mother, if he was here? Eh, Mr. Matthews?

Matt. I do believe I should forget my rheumatism, and dance for joy.

[Military music is heard. The curtain rises, and discovers commodore Freeport and lieut. Boardham in Turkish dresses, but unmasked. Beside them stand Mr. Ascham, Thomas, Fanny, and Colin. The back part of the garden is illuminated. Groups of peasants are seen mixed with sailors. The children are struck with astonishment. Constantine approaches first, looks steadfastly at the commodore, and finally knowing him, he cries out——

O, it is my father!

Ara. and Mat. [*following him.*] It is! it is!

[Mrs. Freeport, Melissa, and Matthews, rise from the bank and, hesitating a moment, run to commodore Freeport and

lieut. Boardham, whose Turkish habits drop off, and show them in their naval uniform. Commodore Freeport springs forward, and embraces Mrs. Freeport and Melissa in turn.

Mrs.F. My dear husband !

Mel. My father !

The Children. [*pulling him by the skirt.*] O father ! O father ! it is our turn now.

Com. I would I could embrace you all at once. Dear wife, and my dear little ones !

Mrs.F. We are too good for loving you, after the trick you have played us. But whence comes this disguise ?

Com. [*presenting Lieut B.*] There, there is the gentleman that you are to scold for this whole adventure. I give him up to your vengeance. [*Lieut. B. salutes Mrs. F. and Melissa.*] It was a smart action of his that first put us in possession of these clothes ; so that he is the original cause of our frolic. I had a mind to show him to you in his eastern spoils.

Lieut.B. I hope, every action of my future life will make me worthy of this lady's love.

[He kisses Melissa's hand.

Com. [*turning toward Matthews.*] But don't I see my old friend here ?

[He approaches Matthews, and takes him by the hand.

Matt. I could not speak, I was so intoxicated with joy. Now I have seen you, my noble landlord, I can die content.

Com. No, my dear friend ! you shall live. This day shall make you younger by ten years. [*To Mrs. F.*] My dear, I thank you for the distinction

which you have shown him. There is not, in all this country, an honester man, and our family will never have a more worthy friend. [*He turns towards the other country people.*] And you, my friends, my children, how rejoiced I am to see you once more! I am fixed amongst you now probably for some years. Let us all study to render each other mutually happy. I shall look upon your happiness as a proof of your gratitude.

Country people. Long live our noble landlord! Long live our noble commodore!

Com. And you too, my friends, long may you live happy, and for that purpose let us be joyous. I have received your entertainment, I will return you mine. We shall not want for refreshment. Every thing is prepared.

Mr. A. We thought, madam, to surprise the commodore, but he is more alert than we are.

Tho. I hope you will allow, sir, that nobody could be more discreet than I.

Col. Then what do you say of me, father?

Mat. O, you have found your tongue at last.

Fanny. You may all say what you will, but I think mine has been the hardest part to-day; for I have only this word to say, and am the last speaker of all.

[A general dance; commodore Freeport joins in it with all his family, to the sound of military music. After the dance, all adjourn to extensive tables in another part of the garden, which are spread with refreshments of all sorts.

THE PAGE.

A DRAMA, IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

THE PRINCE.
MRS. DORFFEN.
ELDER DORFFEN, *an Ensign,* } *her sons.*
YOUNGER DORFFEN, *a Page,* }
CAPTAIN DERENHOFF, *her brother.*
MASTER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.
ATTENDANT.

The stage represents an anti-chamber in the palace Beyond appears a bed-chamber with folding doors open; withinside a camp-bed, at the foot of which, on a stand, is a lamp lighted, and a watch.

SCENE I.

The Prince, in a morning gown, lying upon a camp-bed and covered with a long cloak. The Page, asleep in an arm-chair in the anti-chamber.

Prince, awaking.

THIS is something like rest. This is the happiness of peace. One can now indulge sleep, without being aroused by the noise of arms. [*Looks at his watch.*] Two o'clock? It must be later! I have slept more than two hours. Page! Page!

Page. [*starting from his sleep, half awake, and falling back again into the arm-chair.*] Eh! who calls?—I'm coming—presently.

Prince. Is any one there? What, no answer?

Page. [*turning himself, and yawning.*] O dear! I was in such a fine sleep!

Prince. I hear somebody speak. Who's there? [*He turns the lamp, and sees the Page.*] Is it possible? What, that child here? Should he watch by me, or I by him? What could my people mean?

Page. [*rising up, half asleep, and rubbing his eyes.*] Sir!

Pri. Come, come, my little friend, awake. Tell me what o'clock it is by your watch; mine has stopt.

Page. [*supporting himself on the arms of the chair, and still half asleep.*] Eh? what, sir?

Prince. [*smiling.*] You are fast asleep.—What a comical little face! He would afford an excellent picture as he is now.—I bid you see what o'clock it is by your watch.

Page. [*approaching slowly.*] Watch, sir? I beg your highness' pardon! I have none.

Prince. You are dreaming still; or have you really no watch?

Page. I never had one.

Prince. Never? How could your father send you hither without a thing so necessary, and indeed the only thing for which, in your case, you have an absolute occasion?

Page. My father? Ah, if he were alive!

Prince. You have no father, then?

Page. He died, sir, before I was born.

Prince. Poor child! But your guardian, your mother should have taken care——

Pa. My mother, sir? Ah, does not your highness know it? She lives very poorly indeed. What money she had she laid out upon me, but she had not enough to buy me a watch. My guardian said indeed that I should want one; but [*yawning*] he has not given it to me yet.

Prince. Who is your guardian?

Page. My uncle, sir.

Pri. [*smiling.*] That is good. But there are many uncles in the world! What is your uncle's name?

Page. He is a captain in your highness' guards, and on duty to-day.

Prince. You are right; I recollect him. It was he who brought you to me. My little man, take this taper; hold it fast. In that bed-room there, on that side, you will find two watches hanging by the glass. Bring me the one which you find on the right hand, and take care not to set the curtains on fire with the taper! Make haste!

Page. Yes, sir. [*Goes out.*

Prince. What a sweet child! what amiable simplicity! Ah! if there were a man like this child for sincerity, and that man my friend! It is a pity he is so little; he will never answer; I must send him back to his mother.

Enter the Page, with the light in one hand, and the watch in the other.

Page. It is five o'clock, sir.

Prince. I was not mistaken; it will soon be light. [*Taking his watch.*] But is this the one I sent you to bring? Was this on the right hand?

Page. Is not that it, sir? Indeed I thought it was.

Prince. Well, my little friend, supposing it was, if you had known your own interest, you would have taken the other; for this, set round as it is with brilliants, cannot be proper for a child to wear. Is it possible that covetousness directed your choice? or are you like those who lose every thing, by trying to gain too much?

Page. I do not know what your highness means.

Prince. I will explain myself more clearly. Can you tell the right hand from the left?

Page. [*looking at each hand by turns.*] The right and left, sir.

Prince. [*patting him on the shoulder.*] Well, my little friend, perhaps you distinguish them as little as good from evil. It is a pity that you cannot preserve that happy ignorance! Run and tell your uncle the captain, to come to me. [*Exit Page.*] How ingenuous! how amiable a child! An additional reason for restoring him to his family. The court is the centre of corruption. I will not suffer him to fall a victim to it. Yes, I will send him home. But where must he go, if his mother is so indigent, as he says, and not able to maintain him? I must inquire about it. Derenhoff can give me every information which I desire.

Enter Page.

Page. My uncle, the captain, is coming, sir.

Prince. Well, what is the matter? You look quite heavy. Perhaps you would wish to have a little more sleep?

Page. Why yes, sir, a little.

Prince. If that is all, fix yourself again in your arm-chair. I have been a child myself, and know how agreeable rest is at your age. Go and seat yourself, I give you leave.

[The Page sits in the arm-chair, and settles himself to sleep

I thought he would not need to be bid twice.

Enter Captain Derenhoff.

Capt. D. Your highness——

Pri. Come in, captain. What do you think of the little messenger that I sent to you? What use shall I make of him? to attend in my chamber?

Capt. D. [*shrugging his shoulders.*] I confess, sir, he is rather little.

Prince. Or to go on horseback on my business?

Capt. D. I should be afraid that he would never come back.

Prince. Or to watch here at night?

Capt. D. [*smiling.*] Yes, provided your highness sleep.

Prince. What can I do then with this child? nothing; that is plain. So that, in bringing him hither, you probably did not intend that he should in his service be of use to me, but that I should be to him in his fortune. You told me, I recollect, that his mother was not able to bring him up; is it true, that she is reduced to absolute indigence?

Capt.D. [*laying his hand on his breast.*] Yes, I assure your highness, it is the exact truth.

Prince. And by what misfortunes ?

Capt.D. By this very last war, which has enriched so many. It is true, her estate was somewhat encumbered ; but at present it is taken wholly out of her hands. Every thing is pillaged, burnt, or utterly destroyed. Besides all this, she is environed with law-suits, which follow war as the plague does famine. Happily for her, her children are at present settled. The youngest is Page to your highness ; the eldest, Ensign in your highness' guards. As to the mother, she lives as she can.

Prince. Wretchedly enough, no doubt.

Capt.D. True, sir. She has retired to a cottage, where she lives quite alone and forsaken. I never go to see her. I am her brother, and could not bear the shocking sight of her distress.

Prince. You her brother ?

Capt.D. Yes, sir, unhappily.

Prince. [*with contempt.*] Unhappily ! and you never go to see her ? I understand you, sir. Her distress would make you blush ; or, if it affected you, you think it would cost something to relieve her.

[Capt. Derenhoff appears confused.

What is your sister's name ?

Capt.D. Dorffen, sir.

Prince. [*musing.*] Dorffen ? Had not I a major of that name in my troops ?

Capt.D. Yes, sir.

Prince. Who was killed at the opening of the first campaign?

Capt.D. True, sir. He was father to the ensign, and to this child; a man of honor, and perfectly brave. He mounted a breach with the cheerfulness of a person going to an entertainment. He had the heart of a lion.

Prince. Of a man, captain; that is saying more. I remember him well, and could wish——

Capt.D. What would your highness wish?

Prince. To speak with his widow.

Capt.D. Your highness can do that immediately. She is here.

Prince. Is she here? send for her; let her come to me as soon as she rises. I desire to see her, and return her child to her.

Capt.D. Sir——

Prince. I forbid your mentioning it to her. Go.

[*Exit Capt. D.*

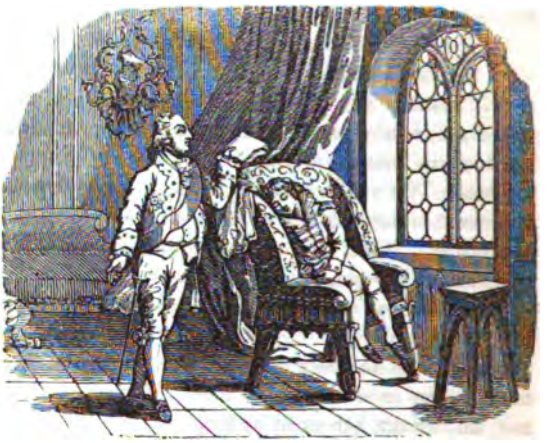
SCENE II.

The Prince—the Page, asleep.

Prince. Reduced to such a distressed situation by the war? Dreadful scourge! how many families has it plunged into misery! Still however it is better that they should be made unhappy by the war than by me. It was necessity, and not choice, which made me take up arms.

[He walks about awhile, and stops before the Page's chair.

Amiable child! how he sleeps at his ease! It is innocence in the arms of sleep. He thinks himself



in the house of a friend, where he ought to be under no constraint. Perfectly in nature !

[Walks about again.

His mother ! But indeed I should not concern myself much for her, if she were like the captain. I will put her to the proof, in order to know her ; and then—then it will be time enough to act.

[He leans over the back of the arm-chair, and, looking at the Page, perceives a letter hanging out of his pocket.

But what is this ? a letter ?

[Opens it, and reads at the bottom, " Your affectionate mother, Catharine Dorffen."

It is from his mother. I will read it. I wish to

know her character. She will not dissemble with her own child. Let us see. [*Reads.*]

'My dear son,

'The difficulty, which you find in writing, has not, I see, hindered your complying with my request; and your letter is even longer than I could expect. This willingness convinces me that you love me. I am sensible of it, and thank you sincerely for it. You tell me that you have been introduced to the prince; that he has been so good as to approve of you; that he is the best and mildest of masters; and that you love him very much already.'——*He looks at the Page.*] What, my friend, have you written thus to your mother? I only do my duty then, in making you a return, and in seeking to give you proofs of my friendship.——

'You have reason to love him, my dear child; for, without his generous assistance, what would be your lot in this world? You have lost your father! and although your mother be still living, you are not the less to be pitied. Fortune has put it out of my power to fulfil all my duty to you; that is my greatest grief, and the most cruel of my distresses. Whilst I had only to think of myself, misfortunes could never affect me; but when your image rises to my thoughts, my heart is ready to burst, and my tears never cease.'——Much tenderness, much sensibility appears here; and if she be as excellent a woman as she is a tender mother,—

And why should she not be? She is, I have no doubt.——'I cannot, my dear, lead you myself in the road to honor and fortune, as I could wish; I am obliged to remain here in solitude and retirement; but I shall never cease to give you my advice with all the earnestness of affection; and, while my words can reach you, I shall constantly entreat you to follow the paths of honor and virtue. As a fresh proof of that obedience which you have hitherto shown me, I request you always to carry this letter about you.'——[*Looks at the Page.*] Well, he has been obedient.——'If ever you should be in danger of failing in your duty, or neglecting the advice which I gave you when I kissed you at parting, then, my dear son, remember this letter; open it; think of your mother, your unfortunate mother, who is only supported in her solitude by the hopes which she builds on you.'——What, has he not a brother?——'Think that she would die with grief were you to behave amiss, and that you yourself would stab the heart which loves you above all things upon earth.'—She sees his danger. She is right, for he is much exposed here. Ought she to have sent him hither?——'It is not suspicion, nor distrust, which makes me speak thus. Your behavior never gave me cause for them. No, my dear child; but your brother has made my tears flow; you, I hope, will spare the feelings of your mother more than he has done.'——So then the eldest? the ensign? I must inform myself more of this.——'You have always behaved with duty and

respect. I own it with tears of joy. Go on, my dear child; become an honest man, and your mother, be she ever so poor, ever so unhappy, will soon forget her misfortunes and distress.'——Very well. I like this woman; misfortune exalts her sentiments, instead of depressing them.——'You tell me, at the end of your letter, that your companions have watches. I know that you should have one too; but you break off there, and do not express even a wish for one. That reserve pleases me, and I am unhappy in not being able to reward it. You know, my dear, that I cannot, and therefore you will pardon me. Business of importance calls me to the capital; I am going thither, and this journey will take from me what little money I have left. It is a necessary expense, and I cannot avoid it. But be assured that, in the end, I shall do every thing in my power to satisfy your wish. And should I even stint myself of every thing, I will never suffer my heart's best beloved to want encouragement to virtue. I hope soon to see you again, and am.....'
—This woman is worthy of a better lot. I will keep this letter to show to my princess. But no, it is this child's treasure; why deprive him of it?—

[He puts the letter into the Page's pocket again.

With what tranquillity he still sleeps! Heaven, they say, prepares the happiness of its children, while they sleep. Ho! my little friend!

[He takes him by the hand. The Page awakes and looks at the Prince for some time.

He is a charming child, upon my life! Come, my

little friend, awake. It is broad day, and you cannot sleep here any longer. Rise.

Page. [*rising slowly.*] Yes, sir.

Prince. You are half asleep still. Here, go into my bed-room. [*He goes in.*] Put out the light, and shut the door. Now go to that place where you found the watch. Make haste; not there, but this way. Here, straight on; quick; come back on the other side. Well, are you awake now?

Page. Heigho! yes, sir.

Prince. Tell me, for I look upon you as a diligent child, and even clever, can you write letters?

Page. O yes, when I set about it. I have written two long ones already.

Prince. These were to your mother, I suppose?

Page. Yes, sir, to my mother.

Prince. Joy sparkles in your eyes, when I speak of her. [*aside.*] What affection they bear to each other even in poverty! Is your mother very good?

Page. [*taking the prince's hand between both his.*] Ah, if you knew her!

Prince. I will know her, my little friend.

Page. She is so good-natured, and so fond of me——

Prince. I could wish her sons to be like her. They say your brother, the ensign, does not go on well.

Page. [*shaking his head.*] Ah, my brother!

Prince. Yes, they say he causes your mother much trouble. Is that true?

Page. Ah, sir!—but I was forbid to open my

lips about it. If his colonel knew—[*with an air of confidence.*] O that colonel is an ill-natured man.

Prince. He shall know nothing of it, I promise you. Speak then; what has been the matter? what has your brother done?

Page. A great many things. I don't know myself quite how it was. I only saw my mother was mighty angry about it; and to hide my brother's fault, gave away all she was worth in the world.

[He goes near to the prince, and speaks low.

Only for that, she said, he would have been broken.

Prince. Broken? For what?

Page. Sir, I cannot tell that.

Prince. What, not to me?

Page. They would not let me know that.

Prince. [*laughing.*] They were very right, I think. But as you have not a watch, I suppose in your letter you asked your mother to buy you one?

Page. Only once—no more.

Prince. O, then she was angry with you?

Page. No, no, sir; so far from that, she wrote to me that she would spare from the little money that she had, and buy me one. I am sorry that I spoke to her of it. She can hardly live, as it is. That grieves me very much.

Prince. So it should. A good son should not be an expense to his mother. It is his duty on the contrary to seek all means of relieving her. As to the watch, if that were all, one might content you. [*He takes out his purse.*] Hold, my little friend; here are ten guineas which I can spare. I will

make you a present of them. Give me your hand.

Page. [*holding his hand, whilst the Prince count the money.*] Are they for me?

Prince. Yes, certainly; but tell me, what do you think to do with this money?

Page. Could not I buy a watch with it?

Prince. Yes, and a very handsome one; but, when we consider the matter, you have no absolute occasion for a watch. There are enough here.

[While he speaks, the Page looks earnestly at him.

If I were in your place, I know very well what I would do. I would lay that money out better. However, just as you please. I am going to dress. Stay here until I come back.

Page. [*calling him.*] Sir!——

Prince. Well, what do you want?

Page. My mother is in town. She returns this morning, and I could wish to take my leave of her. Will your highness give me leave?

Prince. No, my boy; there is no occasion for that. Your mother shall come to you for this time. You shall see her; have a little patience. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Page, alone.

Page. She will come here? I shall see her here? what can be the reason of that? No matter; if she come and see me, that is enough. One, two, three,

[Counts all the money.

Twelve guineas to buy a watch! How happy am I! I think I have it already in my hands; I hear it click, and wind it up myself. But, when the

Prince said that he knew very well what he would do if he were in my place ; what did he mean by that ? what would he do ? he has watches in all his rooms ; so he knows not what it is to want one. But he told me too, that a good son should relieve his mother. No doubt he was then thinking of mine. Twelve guineas ! [*Looks at them.*] It is a great deal of money. If my mother had them, they would be of great service to her.

[He presses the money to his breast with both his hands.

Ah ! a watch ! a watch ! [*lets his hands fall.*] But then a mother too ! and so kind a mother ! Yesterday she was so dull, she looked so pale, and ill : I do believe that giving her this money would recover her at once. Shall I go without it for her sake ? [*With resolution.*] But let her come soon, for I may change my mind. I have the watch at heart still ! [*Puts his finger on his lips.*] Hist ! Not a word ! somebody comes !

Enter Mrs. Dorffen and Captain Derenhoff.

Page. [*running to meet his mother.*] Ah mother !

Mrs. D. [*looks anxiously round, not noticing the child.*] I do not know, brother ; but I am uneasy ; what can his highness want with me ?

Capt. D. There ; look at that child. He is going to give him back to you.

[She looks at the child with concern, who in the meantime hangs on her quite joyfully.

In fact, it was nonsense to bring him here. What can the Prince do with him ? The other pages grow up, appear like men, and enter into the army. But

he [*with a look of contempt*]—he is such a diminutive creature, he will never be good for any thing. The milk which you gave him was poisoned by your griefs. He is a plant that is spoilt at the root. He will never have strength nor figure.

Mrs.D. O, brother!

Capt.D. In short, when you see the prince, say not a word to him of this child. It would be to no purpose. Rather solicit him in favor of the ensign. He has some appearance at least; he is a man.

Mrs.D. In favor of the ensign?

Capt.D. Yes, he has sent for him.

Mrs.D. You alarm me. Can he have learnt——

Capt.D. [*coldly.*] It may be so; nay, indeed it is probable.

[Leaning upon his cane, and shaking his head.

What do you think would be the consequence if he knew that the puppy meant to decamp, and had taken up money? and that it is only on my account, who settled the affair—[*with vehemence.*] I tell you, and you will see it, I shall suffer for my own good-nature, and perhaps be put under arrest myself. I wish I had never concerned myself about your children. However, I never shall again——

[As he goes off grumbling, he turns back.

No, I never shall as long as I live. [*Exit.*

Page. My uncle is always in a bad humor. But let him talk on, mother, never fear.

Mrs.D. Be silent, child; you do not know——

Page. O, I know more than he does. The prince is not what he says. He never does harm

to any body. So far from that, look ! look here !

[Shows the twelve guineas in his hand.

See all this—and it was he who gave it to me.

Mrs.D. Can it be ! The Prince ?

Page. He took it out of a large, large purse, which was full of gold, a little before you came. Ah, if the prince chose, mother, if he chose—O, he is rich, I promise you.

Mrs.D. But how was this? I do not understand it. He must have had some reason.

Page. Certainly. His watch was stopped. He had been hunting all day yesterday, and forgot to wind it up ; and this morning——

[He runs to the bed-room, and opens the door

There, mother ; there is the place where he lay. So he called me, and bid me look at my watch ; and as I had none——

Mrs.D. He gave you that money ?

Page. Yes, he gave it to me to buy one. [*Showing the money again.*] Twelve guineas, mother.

Mrs.D. Look at me. Am I to believe you ?

Page. Indeed you may. But I am not in a hurry for a watch. I shall have one some time or other, [*taking his mother's hand.*] Take this money, mother. Put it into your purse.

Mrs.D. What, my dear ? How ?——

Page. I am sorry to see you always crying. Ah, mother, I wish that I had a great deal of money, then you should never cry any more. All, yes, every farthing, you should have and welcome.

Mrs. D. What, you would, my dear !——

Page. How pleased I should be to see you happy and contented !

Mrs. D. I am happy, my love. I would not give the happiness I feel at this moment for all your prince's gold. Ah, you do not know how the compassionate tenderness and affection of a son impress the heart of an unfortunate mother.

Page. [*again taking his mother's hand*] But you must take this money ? I beg you, my dear mother, not to refuse me.

Mrs. D. Yes, my dear, I will take it. As others may impose upon you, I shall take care to——

Page. To do what ? to buy me a watch ?

Mrs. D. Why, if you remain with the prince, you will want one.

Page. O, no. The prince has watches in every room. He told me himself, I should not want one.

Mrs. D. But what he has given you was to buy one.

Page. That, however, is what he told me.

Mrs. D. You are deceiving me, my dear ; and even your fondness for your mother should not induce you to tell a story.

Page. A story ? Then you do not believe me ? Now I wish that his highness were here ; I wish he would come. [*Turning round.*] Ah, here he is himself.

Enter the Prince.

Page. [*running to meet him.*] Is it not true, sir, that you gave me twelve guineas, to buy a watch ?

Prince. Yes, my man.

Page, And did you not tell me afterwards that I should not want one ?

Prince. Yes, that is also true.

Page. [*turning immediately towards his mother.*] Well, mother, now ?

Mrs. D. [*confused.*] Your highness will be so good as to excuse the simplicity of a child, who forgets the respect——

Prince. Excuse it, madam ? that simplicity delights me, and I could wish to find it in every one ; it is so agreeable to nature. Well, my man, your mother would not believe you then ?

Page. No, sir. At first she would not believe me, and afterwards she would not accept the money.

Prince. What do you say ? accept ? Why, have you thought so little of my present, as to give it away again ? I cannot suppose that.

Page. [*hesitating.*] Sir——

Prince. If I thought so, I should not be very ready to give you more. Come then, tell me the truth ; is it so ?

Page. [*pointing to his mother.*] Ah, sir, my mother is so poor !

Prince. Good boy ! Have you given up the only object of your wishes, in order to relieve your mother ? it would be very hard indeed that you should lose a watch for so doing. [*He takes out his own.*] There ! if I had but this single watch, I would give it to you to reward your affection.

Page. Ah, sir. But does it go ?

Prince. Never fear ; it goes very well.

[The Page runs to his mother, and shows the watch.

Prince. Come, my little friend, put up your watch. And, since you have made such good use of the little which I gave you, [*gives him his purse,*] here, take this. There are a hundred guineas, instead of the first twelve.

Page. Sir!

Prince. Do you hesitate? Here, take them.

Page. What, the purse, sir, and all that is—— ? [*going to return it.*] Indeed it is too much.

Prince. Yes, for yourself. But I give it to you that you may dispose of it. And who do you think wants it most?

Page. Who wants it? [*Looks at the Prince and his mother by turns.*] There, mother, take it.

Mrs. D. [*coming towards the Prince.*] Your highness——

Prince. Pray, madam, no acknowledgements. You will find this sum is very little, and I fear it may be of more harm to you than advantage. But, [*pointing to the Page*] I need not tell you that this child is too weak and too little for my service. At his age, children are hardly able to do much for others. In short, I hope you have no objection to take him back again.——You are silent.

Mrs. D. Your highness will excuse——

Prince. What?

Mrs. D. I own, sir, I am wrong to blush for a poverty which I did not bring upon myself, and I may without disgrace ingenuously confess it to my sovereign. Yes, sir; my circumstances are too

narrow to maintain and bring up my son. I have long looked forward to the future with an anxious eye; and now my fears are real. I shall be the victim of grief. If I must carry back with me into my sorrowful retreat of misery this child, which your highness returns to me, who is the only object of all my concern—this child, who is too young as yet—[*endeavoring to restrain her tears*]—to feel the loss of a father — Pardon a mother's weakness.

Page. [*sorrowfully taking the Prince's hand.*] Mother is crying, sir.

Prince. Well! supposing that you were to live with your mother?

Page. Your highness won't send me home?

Prin. No? Do you think not? This confidence, my little friend, pleases me. Madam, he may stay. And yet it would be a pity if his morals, his innocence—But, no. There is nothing to fear as yet.

Mrs.D. His innocence, did your highness say?

Prince. There is no fear, madam. You would imagine, perhaps, that I would wish to recal my word. But do not be uneasy.

Mrs.D. Yet, might I take the liberty, without breaking through the respect which I owe your highness, to request you to explain your meaning.

Prince. Madam, what I meant was this. I have for some time past been extremely dissatisfied with my pages. Their company and example might perhaps—Yet, after all, it is but a perhaps, and one may try——

Mrs.D. [*eagerly seizing her son's hand.*] No, sir.

Prince. No! As you please, madam.

Mrs.D. My son's innocence is too dear to me. I shudder at the dangers to which I was going to expose him.

Prince. But consider——

Mrs.D. I consider nothing; I see my son in the midst of flames; and, if I can but save him, no matter, though he should be naked.

Prince. But, without fortune, without education, madam, what will become of him?

Mrs.D. Whatever it shall please heaven. I submit to the divine will. If he cannot support his birth, let him go and labor in the fields, let him die in poverty, but retain his innocence.

Prince. This is thinking nobly. Yes, madam, I perceive you deserve every thing which I can possibly do for you. In what can I be of assistance to you? Tell me how I can serve you. Only speak, you see a friend before you.

Mrs.D. Ah, sir——

Prince. Tell me first what is your situation. How is your condition with regard to your estate?

Mrs.D. It will be absolutely impossible, sir, for me to save it.

Prince. Your debts then are considerable? You are at law now, I am told. Do not your counsel give you any hopes?

Mrs.D. None, sir. One cause, concerning a small inheritance, should have been decided long ago in my favor. My title is indisputable. But interest and money are against it. Necessity

brought me hither to town, in order to endeavor to compromise, but I could not succeed.

Prince. So much the better. You shall have justice now, without making any sacrifice, I give you my word of honor; and accept moreover a pension of a hundred a year. I hope that will put you above every necessity.

Mrs.D. O, sir, so much goodness! How shall I—

Prince. I only discharge what I and the country owe to the memory of a man whose widow you are. I do for you no more than I would do for any one whose virtue I esteemed. Tell me, will you still hesitate to take back your child?

Mrs.D. Sir, could I so forget——

Prince. And you, my little friend, would you like to go back with your mother?

Page. [*playing with his watch.*] With my mother? Yes, sir.

Prince. And yet, now I know that you love me, would you not like as well to stay with me?

Page. Yes, sir, very well.

Prince. Then, if that be so, were I to give you back to your mother, it would be sending you away from me; and you have asked me so earnestly to keep you here. Besides, your mother has thrown you into my arms. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Mrs. Dorffen and the Page.

Mrs.D. [*throwing herself into an arm-chair.*] O blessed day! O, unexpected happiness!

Page. Well, mother; now must you be glad!

Mrs.D. [*drawing him to her affectionately.*] O my son, my dear son!

Page. But you do not rejoice. You ought to be merrier, mother.

Mrs.D. Even my happiness makes me blush. It reproaches me for the little confidence I had in Providence, and for the sorrow which I felt when you came into the world. It was but a moment after I had heard of the loss of your father. I looked on you with pity, and lamented that ever you saw the light. Yet it was you, who were to relieve your unfortunate mother! your young hands were to dry her tears! Heavens! what can I desire more? Nothing, nothing, but to be sure of your brother's lot, and then my happiness would be complete.

Page. My brother! Why, mother, what of him?

Mrs.D. If the prince knew what he has done—

Page. And if he did, there would be nothing of it. You see how good and generous he is.

Mrs.D. To us, my dear, who are not guilty of crime.

Page. Besides, he promised he would not tell, and that the colonel should know nothing of it.

Mrs.D. [*frightened.*] What? he promised you!

Page. Yes, indeed; so you need not be afraid.

Mrs.D. I am thunder-struck. You have told him then?

Page. Nay, hardly any thing. Only all I knew. And then he asked me concerning my brother's

behavior, and so I could not tell a fib. You know you bid me never to do that?

Mrs.D. But, my dear child——

Page. Why are you uneasy, mother?

Mrs.D. Uneasy? can you ask? O, if the prince should inquire farther—if he should be informed—you may ruin your mother and your brother! you may plunge us all in the deepest misery.

Page. The deepest misery?

Mrs.D. Somebody comes—[*She kisses and encourages him.*] Say not a word. Dry up your tears. They will only make the matter worse. Do not be uneasy.

Enter the Prince, followed by Captain Derenhoff and Ensign Dorffen.

Prince. Come in, gentlemen. You are ensign Dorffen, the son of that brave Major?

Ensign D. [*bowing very low.*] Yes, sir.

Prince. That is a great recommendation with me. Your father was a man of honor, and a brave officer. I have no doubt that his example rouses your emulation, and that you strive to make yourself worthy of him.

Ensign D. Sir, I only do my duty.

Prince. That is doing every thing. The bravest man can do no more. There, sir, is your mother; her virtues, and the hopes that may be formed of this amiable child, have given me the most favorable idea of your family; and I therefore wished to see you all assembled here.

Ensign D. [*still bowing.*] Your highness does me particular honor!

Prince. No more certainly than you deserve.

Ens.D. Your highness judges favorably of me.

Prince. Really, sir, I only want to be confirmed in the opinion which I am tempted to form of you at present, in order to make your fortune; and yet that air of freedom and confidence which becomes you so well——

Ensign D. Ah, sir!

Prince. Denotes, permit me to say, a heart either very noble, or very corrupt. The son of such parents cannot be suspected. Certainly not. Therefore, sir, what can we do to serve you? A step higher would not advance you much in rank. What think you?

EnsignD. [*rubbing his hands.*] No, certainly, sir.

Prince. Now, if we were to pass over this step? A company! the rank of captain! It is the main object with you young gentlemen. But first—— [Turning short round to Captain Dereuhoff. Sir, what is your opinion of your nephew?

Capt.D. [*somewhat confused.*] Mine, sir? My opinion?

Prince. One would think it to be unfavorable.

Capt.D. No, sir, much the contrary; I believe that he has courage, and will be brave——

Prince. [*looking with satisfaction at ensign Dorffen.*] Aye! is that true?

Capt.D. Besides, he has a promising figure.

Prince. He is a fine lad, I confess. But his be-

havior, his morals? I am ashamed indeed to ask you about such trifles. In short, what is his character?

Capt. D. [*smiling.*] O, a little too airy, sometimes petulant. After all, sir, you know, that does not misbecome a soldier?

Prince. I know? Really that is something new to me. I want now, madam, only your testimony. What will you say of your son? [*After a pause.*] Nothing?

Mrs. D. What should I say of him?

Prince. What you think. The truth.

Mrs. D. But can I, sir? If I have reason to praise him, would you wish me to do it in his presence? Or should I speak to his prejudice before the man who can make his fortune?

Prince. [*smiling.*] Excellent, madam. To the fondness of a mother you join the address of a woman. I cannot but admire you. [*In a serious tone.*] Sir, every one has his way. I have mine. When I mean to advance an officer, I begin by putting him under arrest. What do you think of it?

Ensign D. [*frightened.*] Sir——

Prince. Yes, that is my manner. Give up your sword to the captain. An air of more modesty would have excused all. But this confidence, this undaunted tone—What can be expected from a person who, with your conscience, is master of such assurance? Who ought to be sensible that he has deserved my displeasure? Who knows how unworthily he has treated the best of mothers?

and who, nevertheless,——Sir, let him be confined for a month. I will have no explanation upon what is past, and that on your account, madam, and on account of the manner in which I came in possession of my information; but particularly because circumstances make me presume that his fault is of a weighty nature. [*With a severe and determined voice.*] Captain, if hereafter any thing should happen, I desire to be informed of it immediately; you understand? immediately. I intend to advance this young man; and neither you, [*to the captain,*] nor [*in a gentler tone*] you, madam, shall induce me to alter my plan. Give him nothing, not even the smallest trifle, by way of present. His pay may suffice him; and let him learn to contract his expenses. [*Making a sign with his hand.*] Go, sir, to your confinement.

[The two officers go out.

SCENE V.

The Prince, Mrs. Dorffen, and Page.

Prince. Madam, you seem dejected.

Mrs. D. Sir, I am a mother.

Prince. But you are not one of those weak mothers, who, to spare their children a slight mortification, choose not to correct them.

Mrs. D. That would be a very false tenderness. No, sir, I only fear that he may have forever lost his prince's favor.

Prince. Do not be uneasy, madam. My design is merely to render him worthy of the favors which

I intend to bestow upon him. His youth claims some indulgence, therefore I now excuse his levities and indiscretion, but I shall not always do so in future. What in one person brings back the love of virtue along with repentance, will, in another, strengthen his inclination to vice. In brief, make yourself easy, madam. The young gentleman will come to himself, and I shall proportion my favor to his improvement. [*Turning to the Page.*] As to this child, do you know my intentions?

Mrs. D. Whatever they are, sir, I rest assured that they will only aim to secure his happiness. O, sir! I never let a day pass without paying to your virtues the tribute of homage, but I now see how far it fell below them.

Prince. What would you say, madam? You do not know me. My object is to give the state a worthy member, and myself a faithful servant; and to raise up for my son a friend, who may one day be ready to sacrifice his life for him, as his father has done for me.

Enter Attendant.

Atten. Please your highness, the master of the Royal Academy.

Prince. Let him come in.—I hope, madam, that you need only be informed of my intentions, to approve of them.

Enter the Master of the Academy.

Master. [*bowing.*] I attend, sir, in accordance with the orders of your highness.

Prince. Your servant, sir; I am glad to see you. What do children of the first condition, or for the highest attainments, pay at the Royal Academy?

Master. Of the first condition, sir? That is as parents agree.

Prince. Mention the terms.

Master. Sixty pounds, sir.

Prince. Very well. I intend to send this child to you. And, as I intend to be in place of a father to him, I promise to do as much for him as the best gentlemen do for their children. But tell me, who has the care of attending to these young persons? for that is the essential point.

Master. The different masters, sir.

Prince. Who are, I suppose, qualified for their employment? But I do not know them. It is on you alone, sir, that I wish to depend. You have gained my confidence. Would you be so good as to take this child particularly under your own care?

Master. Sir, it is my duty.

Prince. I do not mean to make it a task to you. Will it be agreeable?

Master. Sir, the fulfilment of my duty and obligations are always agreeable to me.

Prince. Very well. You may depend then on my gratitude.

[To the Page, as he takes him by the hand.

Come hither, my man, do you see this gentleman?

he is mild and good-natured; would you like to go and live with him?

Page. [*after looking at the Master for a moment.*] Yes, sir.

Prince. But observe that you are to look upon this gentleman as your master, as your benefactor. You are to show him the greatest obedience, and the most dutiful respect; and, if ever he have reason to complain of you——

Page. O, sir, he never shall.

Prince. You have just seen that I can be as severe as I am gentle. So that the smallest complaint——

Page. [*bowing respectfully to the Master.*] I hope, sir, you will never have reason to complain of me.

Prince. How do you like this child?

Master. It is enough, sir, that I receive him from your hands, to render him always as dear to me as if he were my own son.

Prince. Well then, he may go with you. You have no objection, madam?

Mrs. D. Heavens! sir, objection?

Prince. Go then, my dear; and never quit the paths of virtue and honor. I have only to add, that you may always make yourself easy and contented; you shall never want. But why so dull?

Page. [*taking the Prince's hand.*] I wish your highness all happiness.

Prince. And I wish you the same, my good little friend. God bless you, my dear.——Now,

sir, you may take him :—and you, madam, will please to accompany this gentleman, and see where your son is to reside.

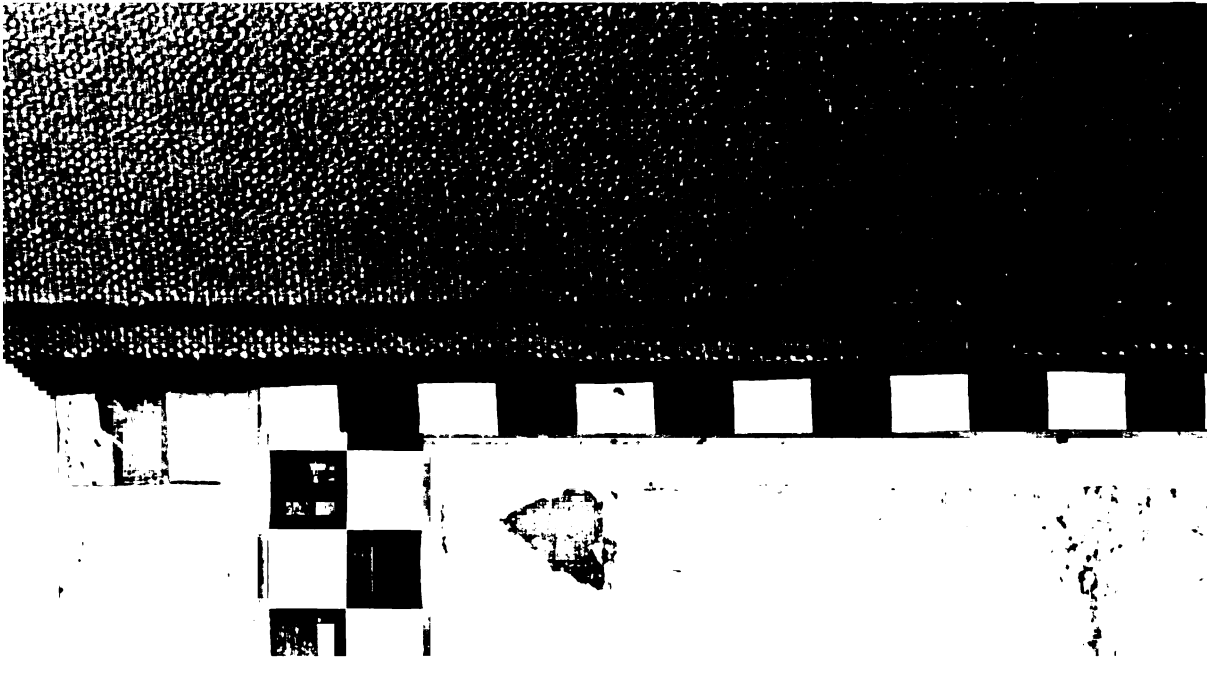
Mrs. D. [*throwing herself at the feet of the Prince.*] Can I leave your highness without humbly——

Prince. What are you doing, madam? I do not approve of this.

Mrs.D. Permit me to——

Prince. [*raising her.*] By no means. Rise, madam, I cannot suffer this in any one.

Mrs.D. Well, I obey your highness, and take my leave. [*Lifting up her hands.*] But I will bend before my Maker, and pray Him for ever to protect so generous a prince.

Prince. Farewell, madam. I wish you happy.

THE END.